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CONVERSIONS COIN-OP

Exclusive coverage of all the latest in-development games for Christmas

TOUGH GUIDES

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TGM visits

THE HIGH FLYERS

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Screen shots from Atari ST version.





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AN ATARI 520 ST
And copies of smash hit *Eliminator* from Hewson
See page 89

THIS ISSUE . . .

WIN!



STARGLIDER THE WRIST WATCH!
from Rainbird
See page 96

. . . AND FEATURE REVIEW ON PAGE 64

WIN

DOUBLE DRAGON

Arcade Machine Cabinet!
From Mastertronic – this is the BIG ONE!
See page 20



REGULARS

COMPETITION RESULTS
Please note that none are printed in this issue. Sorry, but we ran out of room! All winners have already been notified, and we'll print this month's lot next issue. Promise!

the GAMES machine

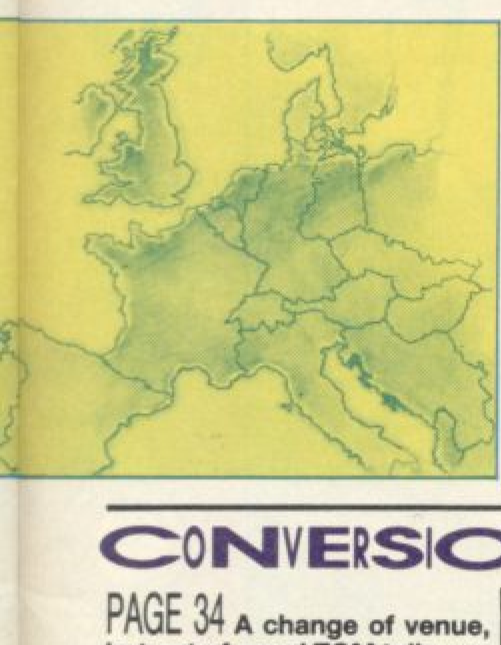


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THE HIGH FLYERS

A special TGM report from the USA

MicroProse have rapidly established themselves as masters of the technical simulation and roleplaying games. With details of new biggies like *F-19: Project Stealth Fighter*, *Times Of Lore* and Tom Clancy's bestselling *Red Storm Rising*, John Rose reports from MicroProse HQ in Baltimore, USA.



TOUGH GUIDES

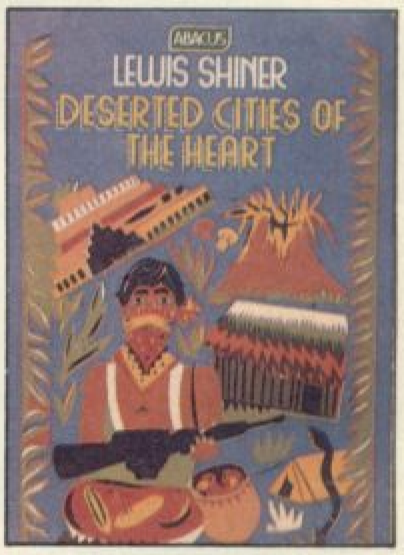
PAGE 13 **TGM PREVIEWS go Continental! Across the Channel, an awful lot of new names are establishing themselves. We bring you special coverage from Spain, France, Germany, Holland and Yugoslavia, as well as the best of British.**

CONVERSIONS: COIN OP!

PAGE 34 **A change of venue, but not of pace! TGM tells you what arcade machines are currently undergoing the metamorphosis from dedicated megabytage to 16- and 8-bitage. And there are masses of 'em, heading your way for Christmas and the New Year, from *R-Type* to *Pac-Mania*. Vital stuff!**



FEATURES



The next issue of TGM goes on sale from October 20

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COVER DESIGN BY OLIVER FREY



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OH NO!! CANNIBALS
ocean

TGM REPORT

ST slashed by £100 as 'super ST' nears

by Stuart Wynne

The Atari 520STFM will drop to £299 again, officials have confirmed to TGM. And Atari are also said to be planning a 'super ST' with 4,096 colours.

The 520STFM price change, which makes it cheaper than Commodore's Amiga again, is scheduled for shortly after the PC Show in mid-September.

But a £399 Super Pack will also be offer, featuring the 520STFM with £440 worth of software (full details below).

Meanwhile, *Computer Trade Weekly* says the so-called 'super ST' is designed as an Amiga-killer. And though Atari refuse to confirm its existence ('rumours are just rumours'), an industry source has told TGM that games are already being written for a software bundle.

Incorporating 4,096 colours, stereo sound and supersmooth horizontal/vertical scrolling, it is said to have a better operating system than Commodore's Amiga, and MIDI output.

ST-fanciers eager for a first sighting might camp out the January Consumer Electronics Show in America. The machine is expected to be in the UK by April, and if it turns out to be more than an early April fool a price of £399 is thought likely.

Super Pack

Besides a Filofax-like organiser, the 520STFM's £399 Super Pack will include 21 games: *Arkanoid II, Beyond The Ice Palace, Black Lamp, Buggy Boy, Chopper X, Eddie Edwards' Super Ski, Ikari Warriors, Marble Madness, Quadralien, Ranarama, Return To Genesis, Road Wars, Seconds Out, Starquake, Summer Olympiad, Test Drive, Thrust, Thundercats, Wizball, Xenon,* and *Zynaps.*

While one or two of these titles have been poorly received, most have been successful and one – *Zynaps* – hasn't even been released for the ST yet.

Portable ST

A portable ST is also expected. Currently known as STacey, the machine is said to have fewer chips than most – reducing production costs. And it may even have a trackball to replace the impractical mouse.

A 3.5-inch disk drive is thought almost inevitable, so the machine is bound to be bigger than yet another Atari release - the IBM PC-compatible Pocket PC.

Due for a January release at under £200, the Walkman-sized Pocket PC uses 'smart cards' to store data.

It has 512K RAM and 256K ROM – the ROM includes a spreadsheet compatible with the best-selling *Lotus 1-2-3*, an address book and a word processor.

ST console?

Details of the Super Pack, the ST portable and the Pocket PC are straight from Atari's mouth. The 'super ST' seems probable too, but there are unconfirmed rumours of yet another ST model.

It will be an ST console for sale in the US at about £120; however, UK release is apparently unlikely.

■ Earlier this year, Atari blamed the £100 increase in their ST price on the increasing cost of dynamic RAM chips. Now they're bringing it back down again, but Atari are only one of many US firms veering from the chip pan to the fire.

Like a first-time player at *Balance of Power*, America may have sealed its own fate in the computer business with what seemed like a good idea at the time.

Anxious in 1986 about cheap Japanese 256K chips undercutting its own manufacturers, the US imposed a minimum price (about £1.50 per chip).

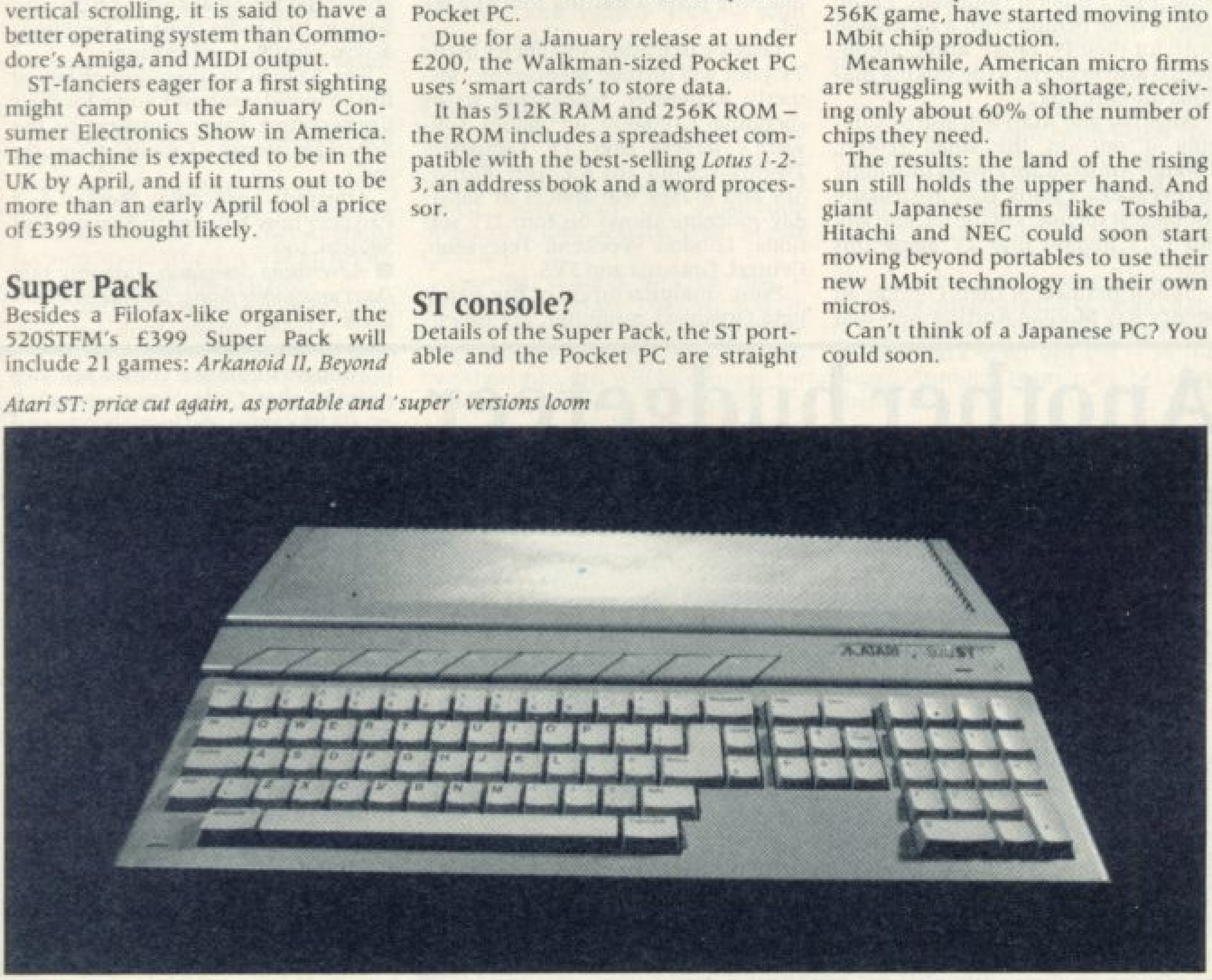
So the Japanese, bored with the 256K game, have started moving into 1Mbit chip production.

Meanwhile, American micro firms are struggling with a shortage, receiving only about 60% of the number of chips they need.

The results: the land of the rising sun still holds the upper hand. And giant Japanese firms like Toshiba, Hitachi and NEC could soon start moving beyond portables to use their new 1Mbit technology in their own micros.

Can't think of a Japanese PC? You could soon.

Atari ST: price cut again, as portable and 'super' versions loom



STOS BASIC: Okay, so it ain't the greatest name for a 'whole new generation of fast, action-packed mega games'. But that's what **they're** telling **us** *STOS* is all about – dubbed 'the game creator', it's a new BASIC-based language for the ST. And at just £29.95 it offers full collision-detection for up to 15 sprites at once (okay, so that sounds a bit technical too, but this is programming, you know?), music, sound FX and graphics capabilities, and change out of £30. Even if it's only 5p.

STOS is already being used by French software house **Ubi Soft** – full details nex' munf.

Fnar fnar: Or should that be *ooer*? Or *nowardimean*? Or even *Real GO! it was, showed 'er a bit of my Ram Electronics I did, get my drift, right little Pulsar she was, really Soundbits Software, it was bluddy Grandslam Entertainments, I'm telling you!?*

Sorry about that – the point (*fnar fnar*) of this one is to tell you that *Sex Vixens From Space* is now available (*nudge*) as a graphic (*wink*) adventure (*eh, eh!*) for the Amiga and IBM PC-compatibles (*compatible, ged-dit?!*). Lovely **Free Spirit Software** can give us a hard sector any time!

Sorely Tri-ing: Trilogic, high-tech manufacturers of The Expert Cartridge, have lashed out in an eleventh-hour bid to stem the rising tide of clichés . . . er, of 'hypocrisy' by software houses.

You see, programmers like John Twiddy (*Ikari Warriors*) use The Expert Cartridge's disassembly feature to analyse programs while they're writing them. But according to Trilogic, **certain nameless software** houses who use the cartridge have also criticised it, saying it encourages piracy (*note to new readers: nice people do not encourage piracy!*).

Now isn't that **hypocritical**? How low can you get? Don't those kind of things just make you **sick**?

It's almost as bad as if we were to abuse the sacred objectivity of these news pages to promote our corporately-related software house **Thalamus**, for instance by pointing out that their new Commodore 64 release *Hawkeye* went from Number 20 to Number Four in the software charts within a week!

Music, Mediagenic (previously Activision), please: Just out for the Amiga is *The Music Studio 2.0*, an enhanced version of the original *The Music Studio*

PRESS ANY KEY

from Mediagenic (previously Activision – **how long** do we all have to go on saying that, eh? Like, are we really going to say 'Amstrad's headquarters in Brentwood, Essex, formerly Farmer Bill's field'?). The £24.99 package allows changes of key signature, tempo and volume at any point in a piece, and merging of songs, which sounds **dangerous**.

Great Steps For Mankind, Part 1: Truly, it was a day to remember, *writes Our Special Correspondent Behind The Telephone Lines.* 'For the first time ever, 1,000 telexes have been transmitted simultaneously,' declared a delighted spokespieceofpaper from Microlink. Dumbstruck with awe, spectators marvelled as Telecom Gold engineers passed the **final frontier** of 50 telexes, which until last month was the limit on each user's queue. The lucky sender of 1,000 simultaneous telexes was job-finding agency Masterfind, and they all went home tired but happy.

Live fast and . . . *Die Hard* is the latest film licence for **Mediagenic** (formerly Activision). Lately Number Three at the US box office, the action adventure starring Bruce Willis (*Moonlighting*) will be out in 1989 across at least five formats – presumably Commodore 64/128, Spectrum, CPC, Amiga and ST.

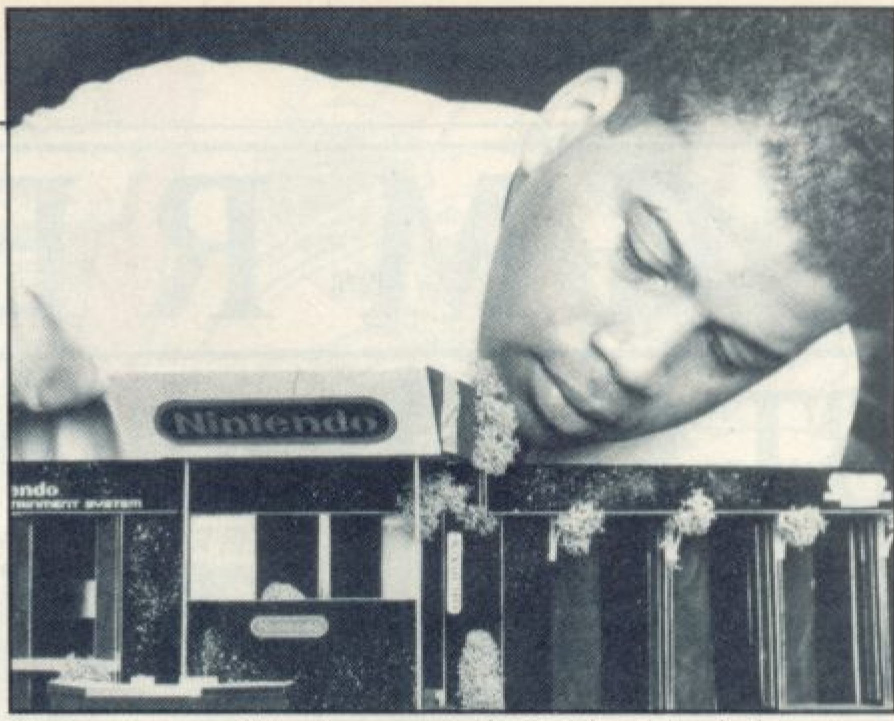
Mediagenic (formerly Activision) have had **good deals** from film producer 20th Century Fox before – in 1986 Activision (now Mediagenic) took on *Aliens* (formerly *Alien*) and two years later they snapped up *Predator*.

Art for Electronic Arts's sake: Electronic Arts (formerly Electronic Arts) are putting more adventure into graphics with *DeluxePrint II* (formerly *DeluxePrint*) for the Amiga (formerly £499). The £49.95 enhanced version supports 32-colour images and colour printers, includes a graphics editor and comes with a disk of images.

Great Steps For Mankind, Part 2: IBM are building a computer to calculate the mass of a proton (formerly 'not very much'). It will have 576 processors, which is 576 times as many as, say, a **48K Spectrum**. It will take six months to run its program. Which is six times as fast as loading a 48K Spectrum game.

Live and let live: Usually, software houses don't speak to each other except in court. But now Domark and Elite are **holding hands** for a licence of the James Bond film *Live And Let Die*. Domark had the licence first, but apparently they weren't happy with their game and asked to use part of an unreleased Elite

'Millions' of Nintendos predicted



Stooping to conquer: Nintendo supporter Luther De Gale explains why the Japanese console is about to conquer Britain. Feature, page 27.

There are about 40,000 Nintendo consoles in Britain and the same number of Sega systems, according to a senior figure at Nintendo.

That may pale beside many million 8-bit machines and at least 120,000 Atari STs. But Michael Wensman, a director of Nintendo's UK firm NESI, said 'the console market is just coming into its own. Soon we'll be seeing not only tens of thousands but hundreds of thousands, possibly even millions.'

Wensman's comment came as doubt surrounds the Nintendo's apparent lack of success in Britain (*see our special news feature, page 27*).

But he said 1988 had not been a bad year for Nintendo: 'We've done exactly what we wanted to. We have a big ad campaign lined up.

'Nintendo have always dominated the market in Japan, North America and now Europe. The UK is going to continue our domination.'

It all ads up as hardware firms try TV

Amstrad may join Ken Barlow and Alf Roberts on Coronation Street this autumn, as computer firms get set for their biggest ever TV ad blitz.

Hardware firms will lead the pack as they fight for the lucrative pre-Christmas sales. Nintendo are planning a £2.2 million campaign, Epson follow close behind with a £2 million push for their PC range, and Commodore is also believed to be sinking millions into the box.

Amstrad and Atari will also be slugging it out on the small screen. Though Amstrad are always unwilling to reveal exact plans, they are usually the biggest spenders of the lot, and will put £7.5 million into TV alone this year.

Simon Bennett at their London ad agency Ray Morgan And Partners told TGM: 'We try to maximise coverage with a broad spectrum of slots, from Channel 4 to the *News At Ten* and *Coronation Street*.

At another ad firm handling Amstrad, Media Buying Services, Paul Roche said *This Week, World In Action* and plenty of Channel 4 slots are on the shopping list.

Mediagenic: 'the biggest'

Atari is apparently rerunning its 1987 ads, but will also receive an unexpected boost – from the Tea Marketing Council! Its Transputer-based Abaq machine plays a starring role in a tea ad.

Leaving that aside, smaller fry in the TV pool will include Mediagenic, formerly Activision, who claim to be spending £100,000 on games software's largest ever TV campaign. Twenty-second ads for *After Burner, SDI* and *R-Type* will appear in Saturday-morning shows on four ITV stations: London Weekend Television, Central, Granada and TVS.

Psion, manufacturers of the handheld Organiser computer, are investing £400,000 in a 30-second ad for the *News At Ten* and *Channel 4 News* as well as regional ITV stations.

■ Offscreen advertisers are laughing all the way to Christmas, too, as Britain's annual spending spree approaches.

Sir Clive Sinclair's Cambridge Computer are planning to spend almost £200,000 on newspaper ads in *The Independent*. Elsewhere in the qualities, Commodore are pushing their PCs in the *Financial Times* and *Daily Mail*.

And American software house Microsoft, creators of the MS-DOS operating system for PCs, have appointed top ad agency Saatchi And Saatchi to handle their £1.5-million-a-year worth of advertising.

The Saatchi brothers, superstars of the ad world, are best known for their Conservative Party campaign in the Seventies (slogan: 'Labour isn't working').

Amstrad's agency Ray Morgan And Partners now belongs to Saatchi And Saatchi, too.

■ *Advertising Standards Authority raps Datel and games house: see blue news columns*

Another budgeteer goes full-price

by Warren Lapworth

Victorious budget house Alternative Software are marching into the full-price world – hot on the heels of their archrivals Code Masters.

They've also launched yet another budget label, Summit.

And the first title on their full-price label Again Again will be a creepy comedy licence, *The Munsters*, based on the Fifties TV show (now on Channel 4).

Alternative's move into full-price comes after an apparently successful summer, during which the 18-month-old software house sold more games than any rival nearly every week.

They claim that about 11% of all games bought in the UK come from Alternative.

'Natural'

Alternative spokesman Michael Baxter maintained that the move was a natural progression for the firm in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, which is a subsidiary of R&R, the software distribution company. R&R also owns a duplication firm, Delacy Duplication.

Though the move comes just two months after Code Masters's assault on £9.99 games (exclusively reported in TGM**009**), Baxter calls that 'sheer coincidence'.

And Code Masters supremo Bruce Everiss said he was unbothered by his rivals' plans, welcoming the competition.

The Again Again label is apparently named in the supposedly popular style of music groups like Duran Duran and Wet Wet Wet. The madcap adventures of Herman, Lily, Grandpa and the rest of America's weirdest family are to be recreated in its first game *The Munsters*, out across all major formats in November.

Meanwhile, Alternative's newish £2.99 budget label Summit is giving away a set of imperial (predecimal) in a competition.

The task: to correctly give a Summit game's value in old money (pounds, shillings and pence). The reason:

'Software albums' expected for SAM

by Barnaby Page

Twelve into one will go, according to Miles Gordon Technology – they're planning 'software albums' with as many as a dozen games to run on their new Spectrum-compatible micro.

The albums may sound like compilations, but the big difference is that they'd include new games as well as 'golden oldies', according to the Swansea-based firm.

The albums – disks with anything from five to 12 Spectrum games – would sell at about £15. And Miles Gordon Technology (MGT) hope to have 'a couple of tasters' out by Christmas, well before the February launch of their Spectrum-compatible micro SAM.

Games will probably be included with SAM, too, MGT's cofounder Alan Miles told TGM.

SAM on course

SAM will run Spectrum software but have 256K of RAM – twice the Spectrum's – plus a built-in networking system.

MGT have now obtained firm financial backing for SAM – 'the bank's confirmed that they're ready to go,' Miles told TGM – and the first prototypes should be through in December.

The public unveiling of SAM will be at either a December ZX Microfair or an amateur radio show in Blackpool the following month. 'So many radio amateurs use the Spectrum and our products,' Miles said. (MGT also produce the Plus D and Disciple add-ons for the Spectrum.)

SAM will then go on mail-order sale next February.

Miles hopes the networking capability (first reported in TGM**010**) will make multiuser games a reality for 1989.

MGT also expect SAM to materialise in classrooms. 'With a network built in from the beginning we offer a product schools can buy in quantity,' said Miles. 'They haven't got to go to buy Ethernet [a widely-used networking system].'

'Album' hopes

As for the software albums, Miles compared them with music. 'Instead of putting out singles, you put out an album. The record industry went through a very dramatic change in the Sixties when that technology became available.'

Miles said that 'it would be important to have one or two possible best sellers' on the albums. But minor games would get a look-in too: 'There'd be more software out that perhaps wouldn't otherwise be released.'

Sugar plan dished by rival

by Robin Hogg

While the satellite battle for the airwaves continues, Amstrad boss Alan Sugar is facing the threat of a cheap dish rivalling his own Fidelity product.

Dubbed the Squarial, British Satellite Broadcasting's receiver is less than half the size of Sugar's dish but will be only about £250, compared with £228.85 (including VAT) for the Fidelity. Small dishes are regarded as better simply because they're more convenient.

A British Satellite Broadcasting (BSB) spokesman told TGM: 'The small size of the receiver, compared with the Amstrad dish, makes DIY installation by the customer a serious consideration.' There will be an installation charge for the Fidelity..

'Its size also makes it a less obtrusive dish than most others,' he said, 'with the result that it will blend in and prove low-key in appearance.'

A prototype has already been built, but BSB are still seeking a manufacturer, so it won't appear in the shops until mid-1989. By then, the BSB satellite will be ready to transmit programmes.

BSB will then sell a package containing the dish, receiver box/decoder, and remote control with stereo sound.

Low charges

BSB will offer three channels: Galaxy for family entertainment, a current affairs/news/live events channel called Now, and the apparently obligatory film service, The Movie Channel.

Viewing charges will be low – indeed, the Galaxy channel will be free. Now will also be free most of the time, though major events and special live transmissions will be charged for on a pay-as-you-watch principle.

The Movie Channel will show older films during the daytime, with the evening peak-time hours devoted to new releases. It will have about 25 films a month, repeats included. Subscriptions for The Movie Channel will likely be around £10 per month.

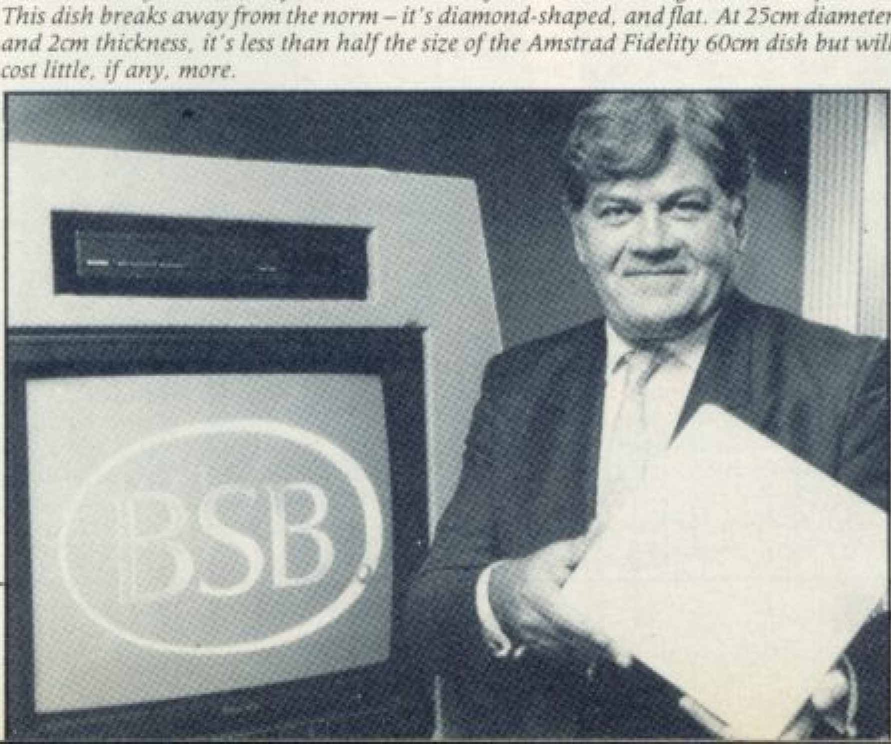
Analysis

In the two-horse satellite TV race, BSB suffered a slow start when Murdoch and Amstrad announced their partnership.

Despite this setback, BSB have moved ahead – and now offer a technically superior dish, with better picture quality, at effectively the same price as their rivals' Fidelity unit.

Yet latest figures from the Joint Industry Committee For Cable Audience Research show that Murdoch's Sky already reaches more UK homes than any other satellite or cable channel – 264,608 of them. And the Fidelity dish isn't even out yet – so the Sugar/Murdoch team may be a lap ahead.

'Revolutionary': BSB Chief Executive Anthony Simonds-Gooding with the Squarial. This dish breaks away from the norm – it's diamond-shaped, and flat. At 25cm diameter and 2cm thickness, it's less than half the size of the Amstrad Fidelity 60cm dish but will cost little, if any, more.



Summit's name was taken from a card game invented by Alternative boss Roger Hulley's father, Frederick, popular in the Thirties and based on the monetary system.

Entries should be sent to Summit Software, c/o Solution PR, *2 Wellingtonia Court, Varndean Drive, Brighton BN1 6TD.*

■ Alternative clashed with Code Masters this summer, over an ad the latter published in *Computer Trade Weekly* with the headline 'Avoid Inferior Alternatives'.

Shortly afterwards, Code Masters published an apology in the same paper, at Alternative's request.

But, says Code Masters's Everiss, 'I would say we didn't have to apologise – nobody can stop us using the English language.'

He added, however: 'There was an element of tongue-in-cheek in the original headline.'

speedboat game as well. Look for it on the shelves before Christmas, but don't expect it to **happen again**.

Meanwhile, rivals Telecomsoft, Mirrorsoft and Psygnosis are joining forces for a three-game, £30, 16-bit, **two-timing** three-piece six-shooter of a compilation.

Featuring *Barbarian*, *Star Glider* and *Defender Of The Crown*, it's apparently just the first of many joint ventures from the three houses. They call themselves Triad. (We all tried calling ourselves Triad down the pub but everyone laughed. It's **not fair**.)

Woolies jumper: Woolworths have sprung further into the software world with the announcement that they'll carry games in **700** stores this autumn. (Currently only some 200 sell software.) Budget and full-price, 8-bit and 16-bit will apparently join the sweets and **screwdrivers** as Woolies aim for more than their current 3% or 4% share of the market, always profitable around Christmas.

It's a rich man's world: And the really rich people are shareholders in Commodore and Mastertronic. In the last financial year ending June 30 1988, Commodore made **profits** of about £32 million, while Mastertronic netted a tidy £1,124,000 (maybe that's why they call them **budget** games).

Elite pulled in £321,000; Gremlin Graphics got to grips with £210,000; and £117,000 **struck back** at Domark.

On the down side, US Gold left the gold in them thar hills with a profit of only £403,000 on a turnover of £7,367,000. For readers without a **calculator window**, that's a turnover-to-profit ratio of 18:1, worse than all the other companies mentioned in this item.

Legal, decent, honest and truthful: That's the way it is with this item.

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), an excellent and by all appearances extraordinarily impartial body, has recently criticised two computer firms. But that makes a change from the bad old days (a year ago) when computers ranked third (after holidays and cars) in the ASA's judgements.

The two recently in trouble are Datel Electronics and Martech. Datel ran an ad saying their MIDI 64 Interface for the Commodore 64 was compatible with Joreth software; it wasn't. Martech advertised *Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix* before it was available without pointing that out – which seems to be one of the ASA's persistent dislikes.

Also weighed and found wanting in the last year have been Argus Press Software (now

PRESS ANY KEY

Grandslam Entertainments), Telecomsoft's Rainbird, and – repeatedly – Amstrad.

The ASA monitor ads to see if they infringe its code of fair practice, and also invite complaints from the public (they're at *Brook House, 2-16 Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN*). Though they have no legal power, the bad publicity surrounding an ASA judgement usually deters advertisers from offending again.

Budget bitz: Telecomsoft's **Silverbird** label will offer ten Mirrorsoft, Palace Software and Digital Integration games for 8-bits at £1.99 each. Titles include *Meanstreak, Antiriad* and *Night Gunner* . . .

Ocean and **Mediagenic** (etc) are putting together ST and PC compilations at just under £25 each.

The Ocean ST quintet comprises *Wizball, Barbarian, Crazy Cars, Rampage* and *Enduro Racer* (the last two ironically from Activision, which as you may know is now Mediagenic . . .).

Mediagenic's PC pack features three Infocom adventures: *Zork I, Leather Goddesses Of Phobos* and *Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*.

Real people buy PCs, honest they do! That's honesty in a market-research sense, you understand. French firm Intelligent Electronics (**there are some?**) say the number of private individuals buying PCs soared by 164% in 1987. That may explain the recent growth of PC games – and may itself be explained by the crowds of PC-compatibles in every shop window, each cheaper than the next.

However, Britain's **PC-maniac** position actually slipped – from being biggest buyer in 1986 this brave island is now third in the Eurochart.

Amstrad (you *knew* we'd get 'em in!) sold 10.6% of all PC-compatibles in Europe, ie 300,000 machines. Sort of moving, isn't it?

DATELINE

September 16-18 **public days, Personal Computer Show** Earls Court, London

November 7-10 **The International Robot Show** Sydney, Australia

November 8-10 **MacUser 88 – the second exhibition for Apple Macintosh computer products** Business Design Centre, Islington, London

November 12 **Alternative Micro Show – Tatung Einstein, Jupiter Ace, Oric, Dragon, Memotech, Enterprise** Aston Villa Sports and Leisure Centre, Birmingham. Tickets from EMSOFT, 80 Dales Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 4JR.

Amstrad find rumour at the top for new PC

by Barnaby Page

Amstrad's 16-bit games machine, the Sinclair Professional PC, will be sold with a monitor when it's launched in mid-September.

At least, that's the latest rumour – doubt now surrounds the details of the new machine, whose existence was exclusively revealed in TGM**009**.

Some reports say that Amstrad will be offering a monitor as part of the £299 package (the figure includes VAT), contradicting earlier beliefs that it would be impossible at that price.

The Sinclair Professional PC is said to have only four colours, and a cheap CGA (Colour Graphics Adapter) rather than the more powerful EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adapter).

Running MS-DOS games like PCs, the Sinclair Professional PC is believed to be based on Amstrad's PC 1512 and compatible with the PC1640.

More rumours

Another rumour has it that the Sinclair Professional PC will only be sold through the Comet chain.

The move is regarded as unlikely because Amstrad sells so many computers through Dixons. But when TGM contacted Dixons computer executive Mike Loizou, he could not confirm they'd be taking it.

A decision on any new machine would likely be taken around the mid-September launch date, he said.

Quality would play a part in any decision on whether to stock another computer alongside Dixons's IBM, Sanyo, Sharp and Amstrad PC-compatibles, he added.

'It all depends on what kind of money's thrown at it, what's done behind it. You can't just put crap on the shelves and expect it to sell.'

Comet's computer boss Bill Jack firmly declined to comment on the report, and other Comet officials were unavailable at TGM's press time.

Rumour analysed

However, Tandy marketing manager Richard Rosser said his chain had not been given the chance to stock the Sinclair Professional PC – though 'anyone and their uncle can normally stock Amstrad'.

Tandy carry the Spectrum +2. They also used to sell Amstrad's PC 1512 and the PC 1640, and none of their own machines would directly rival Amstrad's – the cheapest PC manufactured by Tandy costs £626.75 including VAT.

Tandy's experience, then, suggests that Amstrad have indeed *not* hawked the new games machine around all the major chains.

But a Comet-only deal would be 'odd', Rosser said, 'because people are not buying computers from there'.

And the chain usually associated with Amstrad is Dixons – indeed, it is believed that as much as 25% of Dixons's income is from sales of Amstrad business machines.

Rumour no threat

Like most of Amstrad's major rivals, Tandy's Rosser seems undisturbed by the prospect of the Sinclair Professional PC.

'Will it sell volumes?' he asked rhetorically. 'No. For an extra hundred pounds, wouldn't people buy a usable computer rather than just a games machine?'

However, he added that in light of Amstrad's past successes, 'they will pose a threat to anyone, whatever market they go in'.

And TGM asked Bob Garrett, marketing manager in charge of micros at British Olivetti, whether he thought the Sinclair Professional PC would challenge Olivetti's Prodest PC1.

His response: 'In the home market, not at all.'

The Prodest machine is one of the cheapest PC-compatibles around at £458.85 including VAT, single disk drive and monitor. Amstrad boss Alan Sugar memorably described it as a 'pregnant calculator' and said 'we're going to kill it'.

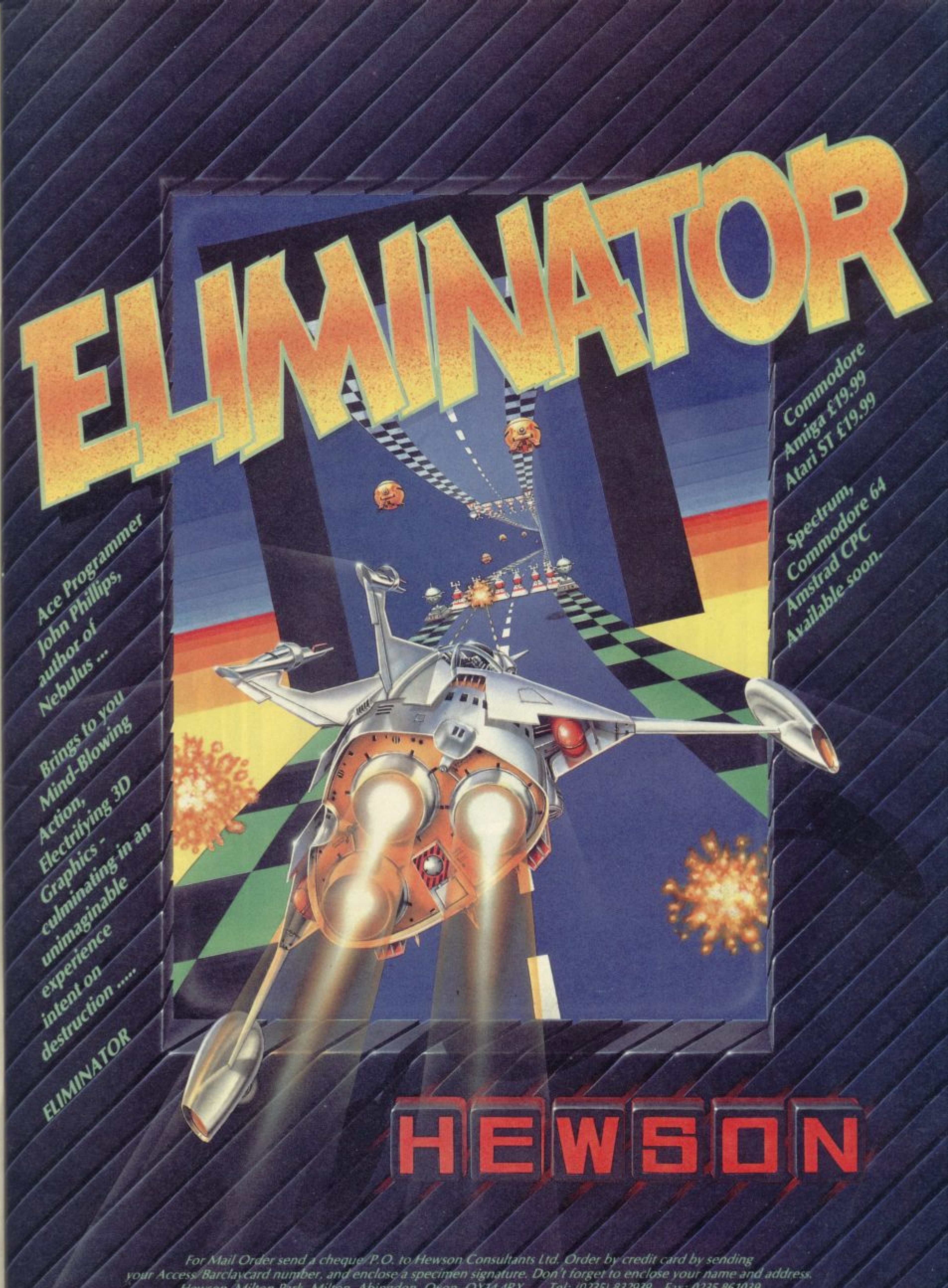
Rumour soon over

Potential buyers lost in this jungle of speculation should soon know whether to beat a path through to their local Comet. And anyone reading this at the PC Show could be first to find out.

As we went to press, Amstrad were apparently planning to unveil the machine, along with a host of new business PCs, just before the show starts. Mind you, that's only a rumour.



Obligatory Alan Sugar picture: rival PC firms don't take the Amstrad founder's threat seriously


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FRANCE

Don't take it Lyon down . . .

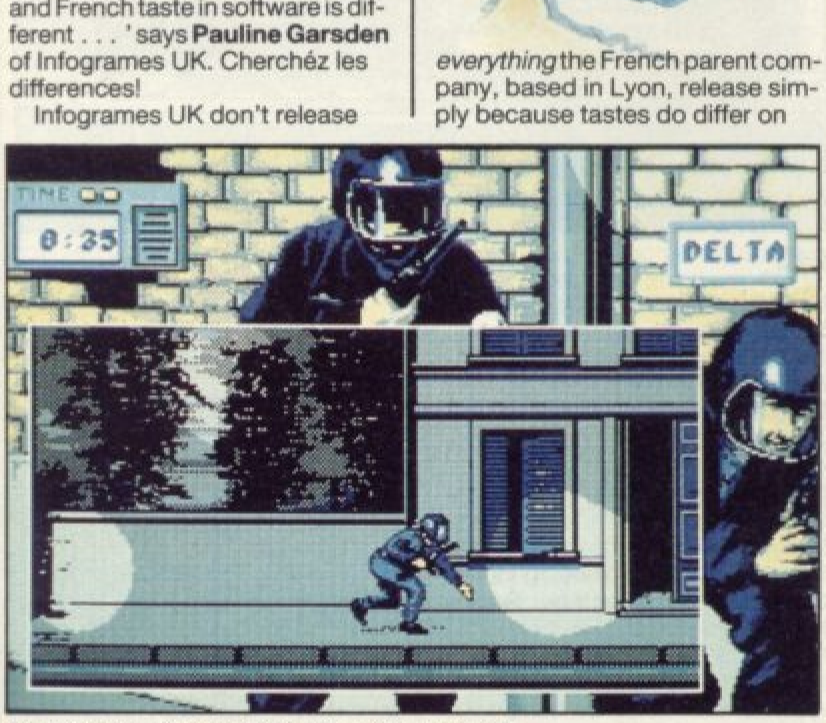
INFOGRAMES

Interesting Infogrames fact un: Although being a French cartoon licence, *Bobo – Stir Crazy* sold better in the UK – where bon Bobo is unknown – than in his homeland where il est trés populaire.

'It just goes to show that British and French taste in software is different . . . ' says **Pauline Garsden** of Infogrames UK. Cherchéz les differences!

Infogrames UK don't release *everything* the French parent company, based in Lyon, release simply because tastes do differ on either side of the channel. Paris-based **ERE International**, one of Infogrames's labels, are the most popular with the UK's gamesplaying public through titles such as *Get Dexter*, and more recently the excellent *Captain Blood*, which did very well over here in *Le Royaume Uni*.

Another Infogrames label is **Cobrasoft**. Although mainly specialists in the adventure market, they produced *Action Service* previewed here.



Send Agent Delta round the side of the Embassy . . .

HOSTAGES
Infogrames

Europe may be open for business in 1992, but are we Brits laying ourselves open to infiltration by European terrorist forces? How well could you cope? Well, the latest import from the French side of Infogrames gives you the chance to prove yourself.

The game is *Hostages*, a strategic arcade simulation which, say Infogrames, has a revolutionary concept and has frighteningly real effects.

The scene is set early on a Sunday morning in Paris where four hostages are held in an Embassy by a bunch of terrorists. Taking the role of Captain Cavendish (trés Français, n'est-ce-pas!?), you're in command of a team of six, three crack marksmen and three climbing experts.

First line of action is to place three men at strategic points around the embassy. These act as cover for the climbers descending the walls to break though a window.

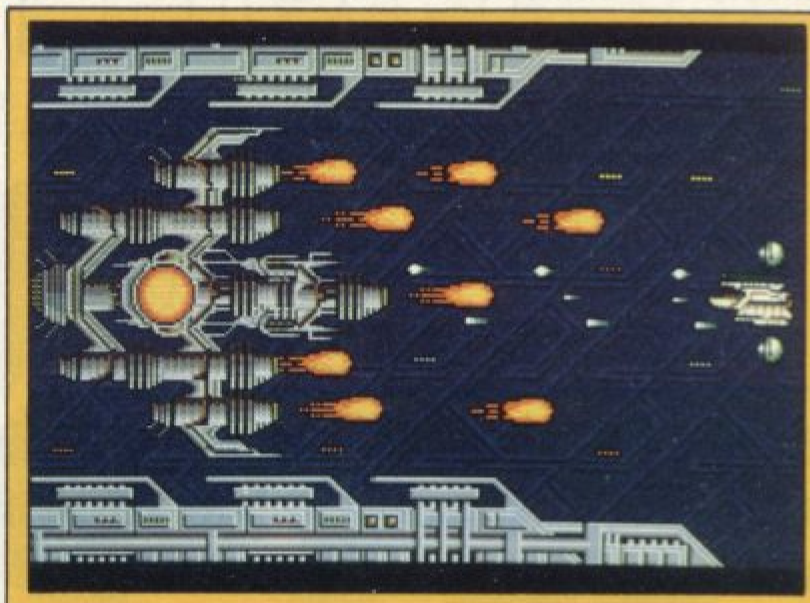
Inside the four-storey embassy, the rooms are displayed in 3-D (-ish). An on-

screen map displays the floor layout, and where terrorists and hostages are found.

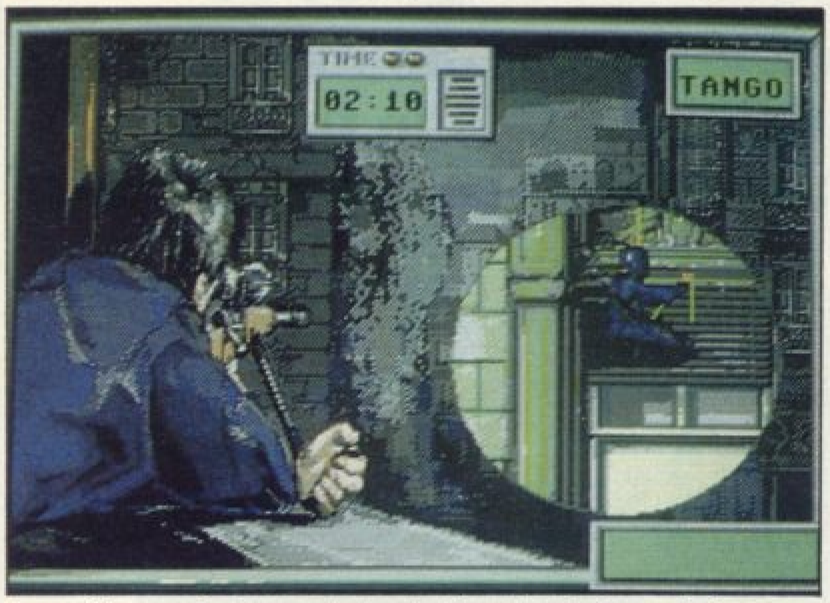
Infogrames claim this is the first game where six characters can be controlled simultaneously by one player. *Hostages* certainly looks intriguing in the preview version TGM has seen, and we'll crack the case in the full ST review next month. Amiga and PC versions will follow *just à l'heure*.

mines, barbed wire, walls, tunnels . . . in fact every kind of awkward object and danger you would expect to find.

After a run through the game, you can replay the action and examine where you went wrong and make plans for future improvement. Included with the game is an editor, which allows you do design courses as easy or as tough as you want. In the shops for £19.95 in September.



MENACE Psygnosis
While we're on the subject of Psygnosis, you're going to need loadsafirepower to defeat this alien ship in* Menace *(Amiga screen) – the evil 16-bit blaster written by David Jones, with graphics by Tony Smith. It's to be released on the new label of Psyclapse. Menace should be in the shops now, and Psygnosis promised us a review copy this month, but due to 'overwhelming production schedules' it didn't arrive. Next month (on the Atari ST and Amiga £19.95) maybe?



. . . provide cover for Tango as he breaks through an Embassy window

ACTION SERVICE
Cobrasoft

Take your Atari ST into combat training in this game released through Infogrames UK.

In principle an advanced assault course, *Action Force* has a few novel features. Most apparent feature is the division of the screen into eight sections. These represent the monitor screens from where the progress of trainee soldiers over the assault course is viewed. Personally, TGM reckons that the eight way division is to make the horizontal scroll routine work better.

The course has several levels of difficulty – on our specially arranged preview version there were four – ranging from reasonable to well 'ard. There are traps,

PSYGNOSIS/ INFOMEDIA

Also based in France, **Infomedia** is a software development house. Their first game to be released in the UK is coming through our very own **Psygnosis**. Called *Explora* in la belle France, it was released by **16/32 Diffusion** and shot straight to the top of the charts.

CHRONO-QUEST
Psygnosis/Infomedia

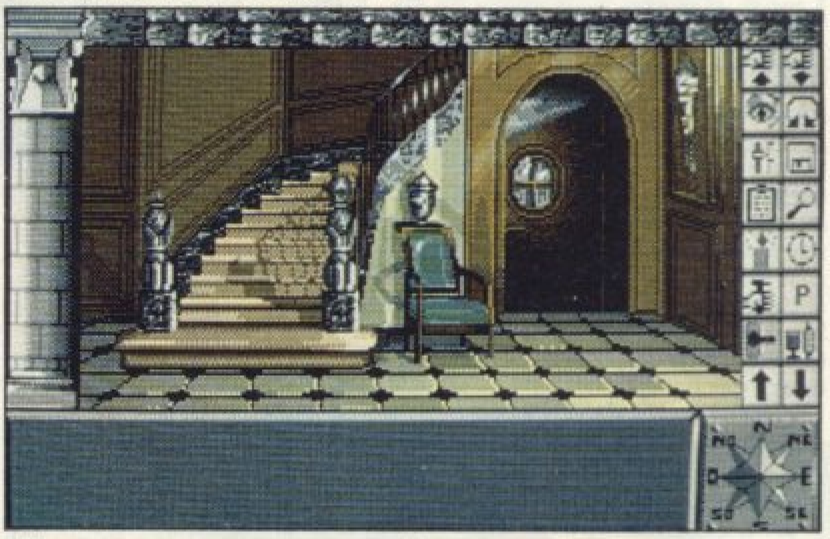
The standard of 16-bit adventures is ever increasing, especially their graphical content, and Infomedia's *Chrono-quest*, (*Explora* in France), is reckoned to be one of the best.

Contained on four disks for the ST (three on the Amiga), *Chrono-quest* is completely icon-driven. The quest begins in 1920 in your father's château. There lies his latest invention – a time machine.

Unfortunately, papa has been murdered, and you are the prime suspect. However, your suspicions are aroused by the disappearance of a servant, Richard, who has transported himself into the future.

The ultimate objective is to collect the fragments of magnetic card, lost in time, to activate the time machine and take it into the future. But you start in a dark room without knowledge of a light switch, let alone where in the huge château the time machine is.

Discover more in September when *Chrono-quest* goes on release for the Atari ST and Amiga priced £29.95 (which may sound a lot, but works out to £7.49 per disk which seems jolly reasonable when you've got Psygnosis's excellent packaging to complement it).



The staircase in the hall in the chateau where* Chrono-Quest *is set



Part of the assault course of* Action Service*. The two guys above shout instructions, while at the bottom of the screen is the video and replay equipment

FIL

Not so long ago, American and British software dominated the European scene, but on the Continent the advent of 16-bit machines has promoted a flurry of games writing activity. For some while, one of the largest of French software distribution companies has been Paris-based FIL (France Image Logiciel). Time for a change, FIL is now intent on seeing its first owned arcade action label, **Rebel**, become established as the biggest in Europe (see also Conversions: Coin-op on page 34). And they haven't been hanging around either . . .

VARIOUS TITLES
Rebel

Hit this lot! Already signed are *Gemini Wings* (Tecmo), *Shinobi* (Sega), *Ninja Warriors* (Taito), *Time Soldiers* (SNK), *Continental Circus* (Taito), *Silkworm* (Tecmo), *Kid Niki – The Radical Ninja* (Irem) and *Paddle Mania* (Irem).

FIL's Rebel makes its UK début in January 1989. Previews of the conversions in the months to come, meanwhile here are some of the arcade shots . . .



While Marilyn watches, the ninjas are out in force – Shinobi





Luxor is the guy in the orange space-suit . . . aliens are the ones about to die – ST screen

YUGOSLAVIA

101 Dalmatians came to play

Software Horizons/Paradox Software

New company Software Horizons has just set up offices in London. Their official launch is at the PC Show (Stand 2545, if you're reading this at the show).

The European link is **Paradox Software**, a Yugoslavian development team, who have written Software Horizon's three launch games for 16-bit machines. The good news is that all Software Horizons 16-bit product will retail for £14.95.

To their credit, Paradox could almost claim to have written the very first 16-bit product: *Caverns* for the Sinclair QL, programmed by **Janko Marsic-Flogel** who still works there.

VETERAN
Software Horizons

You're a crack commando (how come commandos are always cracked?) in the middle of a three-part mission to shoot your way through enemy strongholds. Viewed and played in a similar fashion to Taito's *Operation Wolf*, it contains not only a host of quality graphics but digitised sound FX too (boooom!).

First Veteran stop: enemy base camp and opposition in force – ST screen

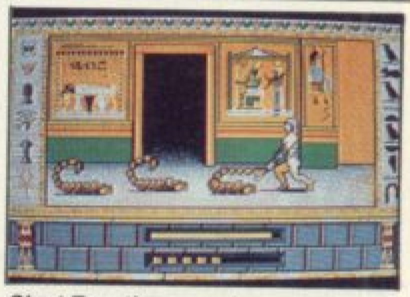


LUXOR
Software Horizons

Three planets are invaded by swarms of aliens. Armed with trusty jet-pack and laser cannon, you play heroic Luxor, as you battle through the infested worlds in *Soldier Of Light*-style. The ultimate aim? Why, to rescue a fair princess from inevitable distress (some things never change).

MAFDET
Software Horizons

Had enough of heroic doings with commandos and laser battles in space? Then check out the opportunity to become Mafdet, the Eygptian Cat goddess. Only TGM can offer you such obscure fun.



Giant Egyptian scorpions are tough opposition for Mafdet – ST screen

Blessed with the powers of transmutation between human and cat form, Mafdet is searching the lands of Egypt – and later the underworld – to locate the powerful Book Of The Dead. As they say at the start of so many films, *Mafdet* is based on a true story . . . an authentic Egyptian legend. Software Horizons claim it features action, puzzles and slick gameplay.





Using 56 colours on screen (go on, count 'em) Crown introduces artistic graphics to strategy

SWITZERLAND

Out on the piste

LINEL

Based in Arbon, Switzerland, near beautiful Lake Constance, and under the watchful eye of boss **Mark Grimmer**, a group of 25 programmers, artists, musicians and designers make up the Linel team. Currently working on around 20 products for the coming year, Mark has built up what he sees as the best 16-bit talent in Europe. Linel have already produced *Insanity Fight*, published over here through Microdeal. But those watchful eyes have sussed Britain out, and Linel will be dealing direct in future. They, too, are at the PC Show (now!), so look up the stand.

CROWN
Linel

An ambitious project indeed. Linel have created a new kind of strategic simulation. Linel say *Crown* (for the ST) is the first strategy game to provide players with a detailed graphic landscape spread over 16 screens, utilising 56 colours on screen. *Crown* is very flexible. You can conquer cities, rule lands and fight off invading armies. Feeling aggressive? You can also invade other territories or even get pushy and establish trade routes. Alternatively a life of crime can be pursued, looting and raiding caravans as they cross the landscape – though be prepared to pay the penalties.

Whereas most strategy games rely on knowledge of battles and past strategy play, *Crown* is user-friendly through its menu system for decision-making – and the decorative graphics make it more of a natural game to play. We'll look at the ST and Amiga versions soon, and the PC version when it has been fully developed.

SOLARIA
Linel

Graphics play a large part in Linel's imminent arcade game *Solaria*. Based on a Mayan legend (another true story?), the game is an ancient Aztec sport where two opponents manoeuvre floating spheres past each other until all the spheres have landed behind one. Acrobatic leaps are the key to success and so energy has to be husbanded carefully to maintain control of the spheres and the attack. Out in the autumn for ST and Amiga.



That old ball game called Solaria – Amiga screen

DRAGONSLAYER
Linel

Jealous of the PC Engine's huge sprites? Fret no longer as Linel's arcade adventure *Dragonslayer* (say it fast and think what other title it reminds you of) should put things right for ST and Amiga owners.

Dragonslayer features 50 huge half-screen sprites – and on the Amiga the graphics are displayed with 80 colours on screen. 'Offering Amiga owners a demonstration of the real

PRESS ANY KEY



One of the castle rooms, inhabited by unknown faces, leads the way to the Dragon's domain in* Dragonslayer *– Amiga Screen

power of their machines,' say Linel.

The story tells of a wicked dragon who terrorises a remote village – each year the villagers have to sacrifice a virgin to the beast in order to protect themselves. The only way to stop the dragon's reign is for one particularly brave adventurer to locate the shattered segments of a medallion, access the dragon's lair and wipe it out.

Graphically, *Dragonslayer* is tremendous, and there are hundreds of locations in villages, forest and the castle (which itself has 300 rooms!).

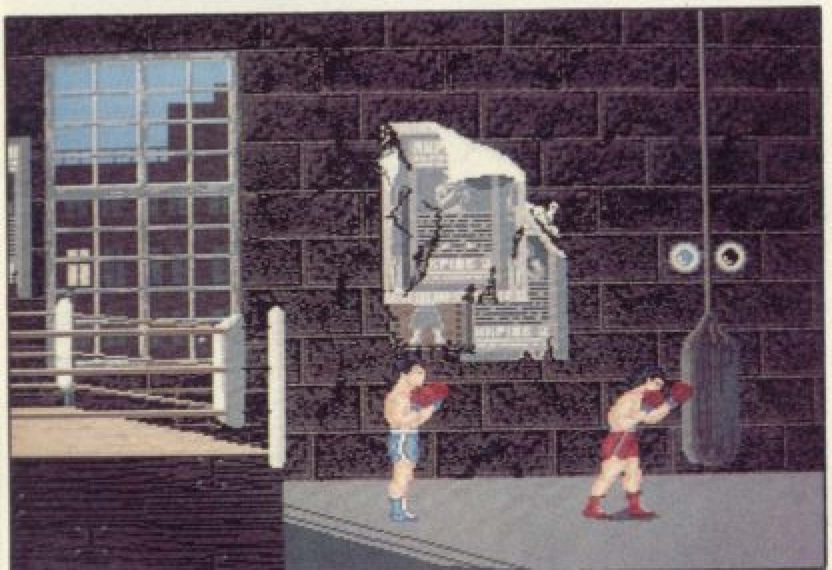
THE CHAMP
Linel

Endorsed by the World Boxing Council, Linel reckon their boxing simulation The Champ is the best ever created.

It follows the progress of a novice boxer from a street-fighter trying to hit the big time as WBC Champion of the World.

The boxing tournaments all comply with Queensbury rules, and there's a referee to make sure fair play is followed – though you can knock him out, you risk being banned.

For one or two players *The Champ* also features huge sprites and uses 1,500 frames of animation, 11 offensive and defensive moves and a couple of illegal manoeuvres. Available for the Amiga before Christmas with ST and Commodore 64/128 versions to follow.



***The Champ** goes in for some training before a match – Amiga screen*

GERMANY



Pot of gold at the end . . .

RAINBOW ARTS

Germany supports several computer magazines – best-known, perhaps, is *Happy Computer* – but home-grown games haven't yet penetrated to the extent that French have. Nevertheless, through **GO!**, Rainbow Arts have already made an impact in the UK. Their latest, released through GO!, but under the Rainbow Arts label, is almost ready.

JOAN OF ARK
Rainbow Arts

Watch out for a bigger preview next month of Rainbow Art's epic arcade adventure quest, *Joan Of Ark*. The Dussledorf-based company have already given us *Great Giana Sisters*, but *Joan Of Ark* is totally different in style although it boasts the same polished gameplay. Taking the form of a film (somewhat like *Defender Of The Crown* et al), the game is for 16-bit first, with a Commodore 64/128 version expected. Stay tuned.



HOLLAND

Tulips are better than one . . .

BOYS WITHOUT BRAINS

The Tough Guides entry for the Netherlands is admittedly a touch thin, but things, our correspondent assures us, are hotting up. Meanwhile, that madcap **Thalamus** mob, The Boys Without Brains, are hard at work on their follow-up to *Hawkeye*.

BAMBOO
Thalamus

Crazy Dutch programmers, The Boys Without Brains – creators of *Hawkeye* (TGM **009** 80%) – are delving into their Commodore's insides to find a game with the (tongue-in-cheek?) title of *Bamboo*.

Although little is known at present, it's a massive shoot-'em-up with a nifty eight-way directional scrolling routine. Plans are afoot for a Christmas release if the dykes hold, and we'll bring you the full preview very shortly.



SPAIN

On the Costa del soft

TOPOSOFT

Apart from Dinamic, **Toposoft** are the only Spanish programming company to have broken into the UK before. There were some early Spectrum games released through various British software houses here, and the last title was *Survivors*, through US Gold. It was a graphically excellent arcade adventure. Now the Madrid-based company have just completed the *Mad Mix Game*, which US Gold are publishing as the first part of their promotional tie-up with Pepsi Cola.

MAD MIX GAME
US Gold/Toposoft

Twelve levels of a maze game starring Mad, a yellow, munching creature, who loves scoffing blue power pills screen after screen. Ghostly adversaries are out to prevent him doing so – but changing into a hippo or devil allows Mad to munch them too.

Sounds familiar? Well, yes . . . it *is* similar to *Pac-Man* and the millions of clones since. *Mad Mix Game* is the first of the Pepsi Challenges running on several US Gold games. Inside the packaging is a high-score set by US Gold, if you beat it you are automatically entered into a free prize draw.



Mad, bad and dangerous to know . . . especially for the ghosts in* Mad Mix Game *– Amstrad screen

The *Mad Mix Game* should be on sale by the time you read this on the Commodore 64/128, Spectrum and Amstrad CPC at £7.99 cassette and £11.99 on disk, with an ST version to follow. Reviews next issue . . .





GREAT BRITAIN

Best of British for September . . .

ALL SORTS

Island of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and French mustard, cold custard and Swiss Roll, Britain needs no introduction to regular TGM reader – after all, loads of us have to live and shiver here. So, on with the entries . . .

FUSION
Electronic Arts

When you've got an Amiga shoot-'em-up, there are a few simple guidelines to follow. One: designate an alien planet where the action takes place. Two: include crazy names for enemies such as, nitro mice, rotating plasma spheres, UHOs and ergonomic eruptors. Three: include crazy names for the player's ship defence systems, Electro Shields with multi-mega-bullets. Four: include a 'totally innovative feature' . . . an information panel with an encoded base-ten alien numeric scoring system. Five: call the game something powerful: . . . like *Fusion.*

Anyone can do it! Basically, *Fusion* is a graphical shoot-'em-up written by **Bullfrog Productions** to be published by Electronic Arts in October.



Watch out for them ergonomic eruptors – deadly foes in Fusion *– Amiga screen*

ELITE IN THE SKY
The ultimate space trading game Elite *hits the ST on September 29. After much anticipation, the Mr Micro conversion is far more colourful than any other versions of Firebird's epic. Review next month.*



REX
Martech

They say they have a game which takes over from where the last great original Spectrum games left off. Martech mean their latest product, *Rex*, for the Spectrum, has wild amounts of playability and graphics to make you gasp (just like the old days).

And yes, on the graphics front, we have to agree – screens of colourful, animated characters and backdrops make *Rex* a



delight to view. However, we haven't played it yet.

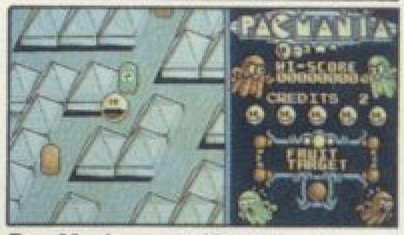
Rex a piggy-eyed mercenary who enters Zenith to do away with capitalistic, uncaring, atmosphere-polluting humans who have built their fortunes around the Great Tower. To crush the system Rex explores the underground system, destroys the miriad subterranean creatures, and locates the entrance.

Once inside set the charges and watch the whole tower crumble. Released sometime in November, *Rex* will cost you £8.99 on cassette, £14.99 on + diskette.

PAC-MANIA
GrandSlam

He's mad, he's bad, he's cute and yellow. Following the successful Commodore 64/128 conversion of *Pac-Land*, Pac's back again. This time our yellow chum stars in the Namco conversion in glorious 3-D – and he's blessed with the ability to bounce over Clyde and the rest of the ghostly group, now joined with by the girls Sue and Flunky.

Pac-Mania is basically the



Pac-Mania, *sort of* Pac-Man *'88*

same old *Pac-Man* game with up-to-date graphics and animation. Players of the coin-op know its serious addiction. Watch out for this one on all major formats.

GI HERO
Firebird

Yeah, he sounds the type of guy who wears the obligatory scar on the left cheek and is so hard he eats FOUR Shredded Wheats for breakfast. In fact, he's so hard he probably doesn't eat breakfast at all.

Which is just as well as in this 8-bit October release from Firebird, Mr Hero enters a potentially suicidal mission requiring stealth and cunning. GI and his pooch, Killer, are dropped by parachute into enemy territory. Unfortunately Killer has gone AWOL, leaving GI alone.

To retrieve your deputy dawg you'll have to break through the enemy camp and search it before setting off to achieve your ultimate objective of locating secret papers and returning to HQ.

A game with guts, we're told; find out when *GI Hero* is released for Spectrum, Commodore 64/128 and Amstrad CPC on October 19.



In the underground tunnels, GI Hero finds Killer – Spectrum screen


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There's only a few days to go before the opening ceremony, so make a dash for your local dealer and ask about the C64 Olympic Challenge pack. Or telephone 0800 800 477 for more details.



Commodore

GET TOU

WIN YOURSELF THE DOUBLE DRAGON COIN-OP — IT'S DEADLY!

*This is the big one . . . Melbourne House have teamed up with TGM to offer you the chance of winning the original smash-hit coin-op **Double Dragon**. It's that lean, mean, fighting machine that has everyone hooked in the arcades.*

*Taito's **Double Dragon** is scheduled for released on Spectrum, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST, Amiga and PC by Melbourne House in October – and they're promising a brilliant conversion.*

*The task of converting **Double Dragon** (the sequel to* Renegade*) is in the scintillating hands of Manchester-based Binary Design, well-known for many excellent arcade conversions.*

***Double Dragon**'s theme is violent, but it's all in a good cause. A gang of putzes have kidnapped your girlfriend and are holding her prisoner in Putz HQ. You and your brother (playing simultaneously on screen) are on the warpath, set to rescue her.*

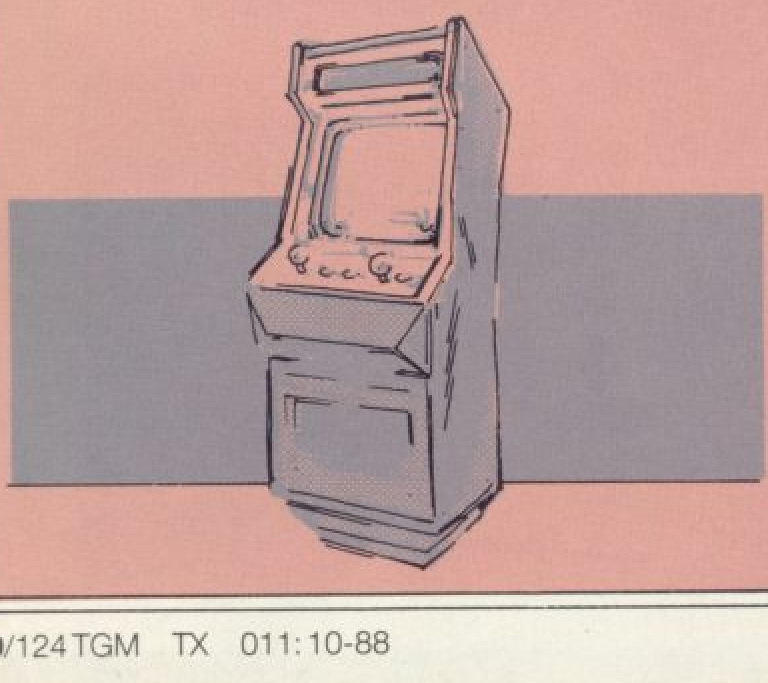
The action takes you through many sections in downtown streets, all filled with angry opposition. Defeat one bunch of putzes and have a bash at the next; you may end up battered and scarred, but it's all for love! Let's fight!

FIRST PRIZE

Double Dragon arcade machine in full! Complete in cabinet, the coin-op has all the joysticks and buttons for two players. And the best of it is that you won't have to spend a penny on playing it! (except the price of a stamp).

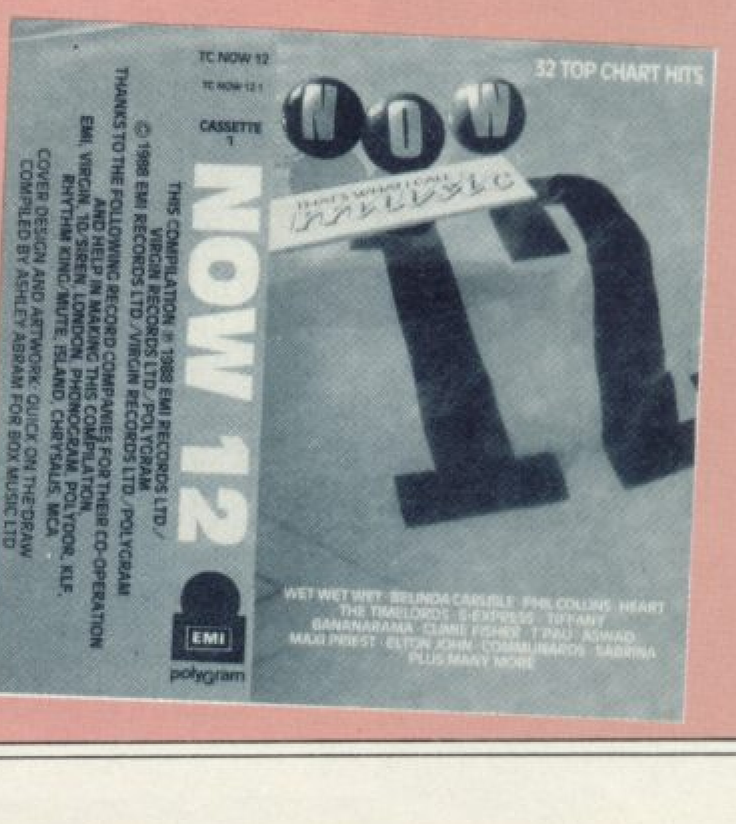
Melbourne House will deliver the machine to your doorstep (and might even help take it upstairs . . .). So there's no worry about having to collect it from somewhere in London House and lug it all the way home.

There's only one machine – and only one first-prize winner. But it could be you!

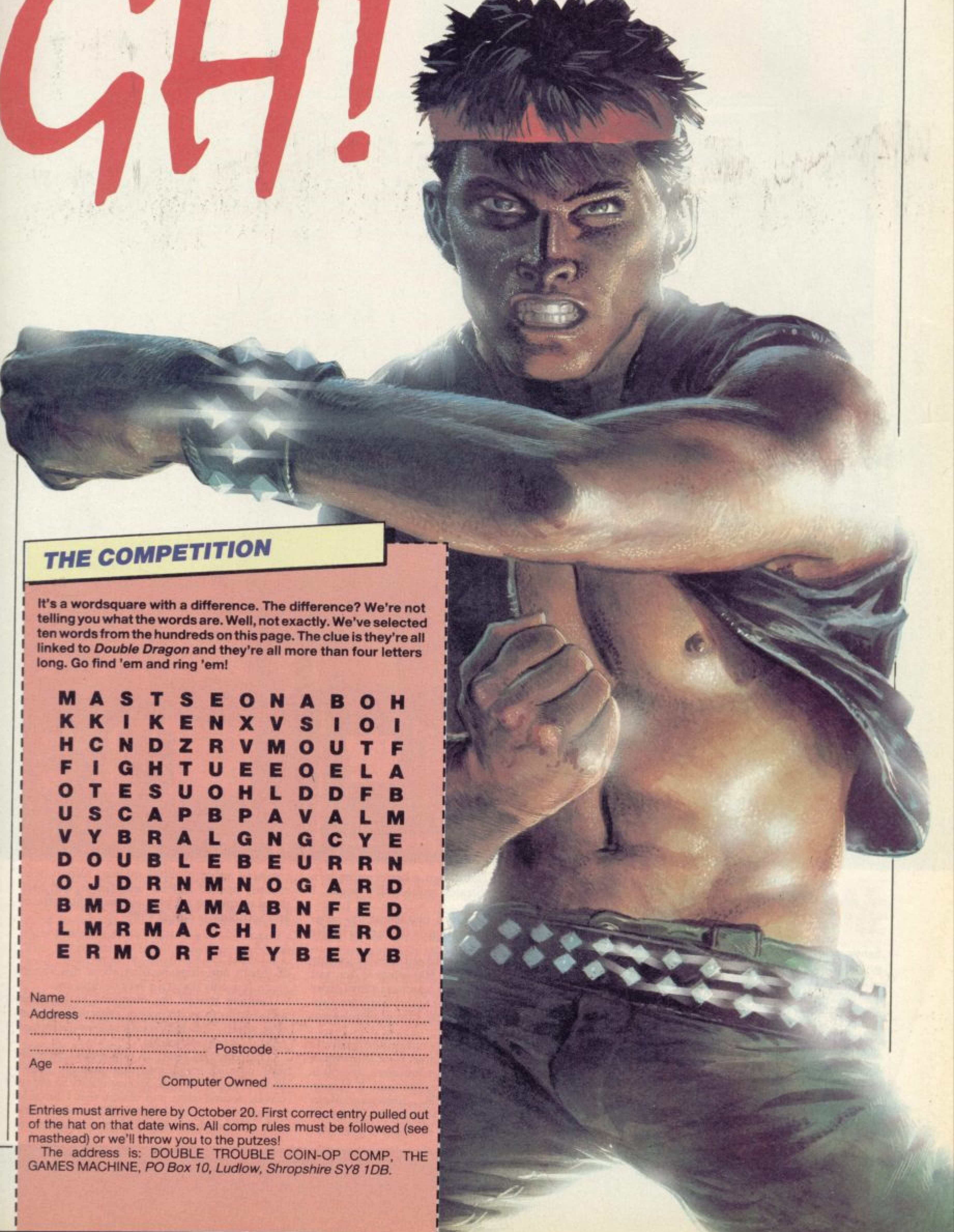


RUNNERS UP

For TEN runners-up there is a copy of *Double Dragon* on any format, and a copy of *Now That's What I Call Music 12* – the stupendous double album (on cassette or LP) featuring S-Express, Wet Wet Wet, Communards . . . in fact 32 top chart hits from this summer's musical types.



'GH!



THE COMPETITION

It's a wordsquare with a difference. The difference? We're not telling you what the words are. Well, not exactly. We've selected ten words from the hundreds on this page. The clue is they're all linked to *Double Dragon* and they're all more than four letters long. Go find 'em and ring 'em!

M	A	S	T	S	E	O	N	A	B	O	H
K	K	I	K	E	N	X	V	S	I	O	I
H	C	N	D	Z	R	V	M	O	U	T	F
F	I	G	H	T	U	E	E	O	E	L	A
O	T	E	S	U	O	H	L	D	D	F	B
U	S	C	A	P	B	P	A	V	A	L	M
V	Y	B	R	A	L	G	N	G	C	Y	E
D	O	U	B	L	E	B	E	U	R	R	N
O	J	D	R	N	M	N	O	G	A	R	D
B	M	D	E	A	M	A	B	N	F	E	D
L	M	R	M	A	C	H	I	N	E	R	O
E	R	M	O	R	F	E	Y	B	E	Y	B

Name ....
Address ....
....
.... Postcode ....
Age ....
Computer Owned ....

Entries must arrive here by October 20. First correct entry pulled out of the hat on that date wins. All comp rules must be followed (see masthead) or we'll throw you to the putzes!

The address is: DOUBLE TROUBLE COIN-OP COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*

THE HIGH

Major William Stealey and Sid Meier turned $3,000 into $20 million in six years. They did it as MicroProse. From Helicat Ace to Red Storm Rising, the games keep coming – and winning. TGM's John Rose flew to MicroProse HQ in Hunt Valley near Baltimore, Maryland, USA to learn the secrets of their success and play-test the latest games currently under development



MicroProse HQ, Near Baltimore, Maryland, USA




Wild Bill: enthusiastic about F-19


The accolades of international success

Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey is perhaps one of the best-known and most charismatic figures in the home computer industry. His gung-ho approach to life and business, together with his colourful past as a fighter pilot, has guaranteed him a high media profile, which he has not been slow to exploit.

Less vocal but just as vital to the success of the company is MicroProse's co–founder and senior vice–president, Sid Meier. The story of how the company was formed is anecdotal.

In 1982 Meier and Stealey were both employees of General Instruments Corporation. They were playing an arcade game of aerial combat – *Red Baron* – while attending a conference in Las Vegas. Stealey, a former USAF flight instructor with experience of flight simulators, complained of the game's quality after Meier beat him by analysing its algorithms.

Meier said, 'I can design a better game in a week.' To which Stealey replied, 'If you can, I can sell it.'

In fact *Hellcat Ace* took two months to program, but it was the first rung on the success ladder for the company.

A major distributor phoned Stealey shortly after, to place an order for 500 copies of *Ace*, and suddenly the business was no longer a mail order operation. *Chopper Rescue* – the first ever two-player game – was the next title to be released; snapped up by CBS.

September 1983, Stealey realised he'd have to take on staff. He took on three. Now MicroProse employs 90 at the USA headquarters, and 50 in the UK. Stewart Bell was appointed UK Managing Director in 1986. In 1982, Stealey and Meier invested $1,500 apiece in MicroProse. Today it's worth $20 million, and by 1990 Stealey predicts a company value of $100 million. Offices were recently opened in Paris and Tokyo, and additional operations are planned for West Germany and Scandinavia during 1988.

I kinda like that

If there's one thing peculiar about this success story, it is only that it's a very obvious one.

Looking around the Maryland headquarters and chatting to programmers, game designers and play testers, the feeling of common-interest in product is overwhelming.

The company treats its employees extremely well, a policy which evidently pays off. MicroProse is profit-sharing. Stealey insists he always travels second class and claims that Christmas bonuses for staff of $1,000–2,000 are not uncommon. When they visit, UK programmers are

FLYERS



F-19 PROJECT STEALTH FIGHTER

THE BIG ONE! Wild Bill couldn't hide his enthusiasm as he loaded this up on the IBM with EGA attached. 'Okay boy I'm going in, I'm going in! Zow-eee! I love this, I've got him in my sights – he's down, he's down, I'm comin' round again . . . '

The demo of *F-19* on a souped-up IBM was nothing short of staggering. To call graphics awesome is an industry cliché, but, well, they are. What's more, speed hasn't been sacrificed, and that's where those 50 polygons per screen really come in. However, you will need EGA and you'll probably have to wait awhile before this one arrives in Europe.

The world of *F-19* is a *real* world. You fly over solid, filled 3-D landscapes populated by solid buildings, bridges, boats and just anything you'd finding floating around the Iranian gulf or sundry other hotspots around the world.

All the aerial manoeuvres that were in the original *F-19* are in here, but with enhancements. In the final version not only will you be able to blow up a bridge, but you'll be able to go back and see the smouldering wreck you've left behind. This could just be the best military flight simulator that we've seen.

SAMURAI

BECOME SHOGUN in feudal Japan by dealing with the clans of 48 separate provinces. Utilising both arcade and strategy elements, *Samurai* owes some allegiance to *Pirates* – the fighting sequences look quite familiar. However, in *Samurai* you move vertically. The reason, the programmer informs me, is to increase the feel of the slashing downstrokes of the mighty samurai sword.



Essentially a complex roleplaying game with arcade and strategy sequences, *Samurai*'s objective is to get you thinking like a 16th century Japanese warrior. It's possible to win by devious means, but unless you tread the path of honour, you'll find it very difficult indeed.

SOCCER

AN UNASHAMEDLY fun-to-play offering and quite an unlikely one from MicroProse, *Soccer* is a simple arcader which oozes addictive gameplay. Viewed from above, you pass the ball, perform headers and execute the various moves well-loved by footy fanatics in your quest to win the match.

The nice features include weather sound FX and an action replay sequence uncannily like watching a real video replay, complete with 'R' in the corner of the screen.

COVERT ACTION

AN ICON-DRIVEN spy game with sequences similar to those in *Airborne Ranger*. Choose which spy to play from either the good guys – CIA, MI5 or MOSSAD – or the bad guys – KGB or the DGSE (who, if you don't know, are the French – will this be a popular option, one wonders?).

Choosing a covert or an overt approach, your objective is to penetrate embassies, government headquarters and military installations. A programming routine means that there are well over 3,000 possible spies to meet, each with their own identity and characteristics. Due out this year first on the C64, it promises to be a lot of fun.

given £1000 per month, in hand, plus free use of a luxury apartment.

In fact the British programmers who have migrated to the the Hunt Valley headquarters see their new location as something of a Shangri-La. The conditions of employment are extremely good. Clean offices, light and luxurious, programmers want for nothing. All the latest equipment is here to develop on; if you want a C compiler, or whatever, you get it.

But what else keeps the programmers happy? Well, there's the good weather, the people are friendly and there's more seafood in Baltimore than even the bravest would attempt to consume. Then there are the ball games, the bars, cheap compact discs, all-night movies, cable TV, fast cars,..

Product development time can be several years – *Gunship* is a noteable case – and that's before the play testing and quality control.

MicroProse's commitment to quality is no idle boast and Stealey's claim that 'you get what you pay for' is a fair one. Manuals, keyboard overlays and all of the other boxed goodies that are synonymous with MicroProse simulations can be hideously expensive to produce. Stewart Bell informed me that the mark-up for most of the products in Europe can be counted in cents rather than dollars. Bear in mind that, in the UK, you pay half, or even less, than your American counterpart has to shell out.

Open any game box, take out the manual and you cannot fail to be impressed at the level of detail and accuracy that has gone into it. MicroProse employ resident game designers – not necessarily programmers themselves – whose task is similar to television researchers, and it's they we have to thank for the level of detail that goes into the games.

Tom Clancy, author of *Red Storm Rising*, was informed by the former US Navy Secretary when he read *The Hunt For Red October*, that if Clancy was in the military he would have been court-martialled for revealing classified information. It's likely that some of the details that have gone into the computer version of *Red Storm Rising* are equally sensitive, and it's still not clear how all of the information in the manual for *F-19 Project Stealth Fighter* was come by.

The quality control department can hang on to a game for six months before allowing its release. The play testers are rigorous, they simply won't let a game go if they suspect there's even a minute bug hiding somewhere in the code. This is one reason Atari ST owners have been kept waiting five months for the release of *Kennedy Approach*.

Says Stealey 'My objective is to bring out six

High above the cultivated fields of Maryland, Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey takes a British journalist for a 'sick-bag ride' . . .



TIMES OF LORE

ORIGIN SYSTEMS, a division of MicroProse, have been producing roleplay computer games for years. The two latest additions to the range are *Times Of Lore* and *Ultima V: Warriors Of Destiny* (reviewed on page 46).

In *Times Of Lore* you can take the role of a Knight, Barbarian or Valkyrie travelling a magical, scrolling land performing various magical tasks, picking up information along the way and duelling with monsters. It may sound like *Gauntlet*, but, as the programmer is quick to point out, *Times Of Lore* is not a dungeon game.


Time Of Lore: ***two of the developers working on the game***

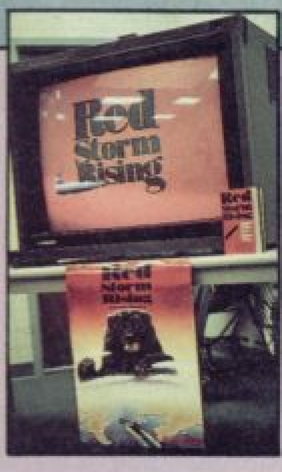
The land consists of a 50 x 100 screen grid. It operates in real-time complete with 'intelligent' opposition who go on carrying out their various tasks irrespective of what you are doing. And the screen gets darker and lighter according to the time of day.

One of the game's nicest features is its use of keywords. Unlike many other games, *Times Of Lore* only presents you with keywords that are relevant at a particular point in the game. If you cannot, for some reason, open a door, then the option 'open door' does not appear in the word-stack. Similarly, when a word no longer has a use it disappears from the screen.

It takes the game testers three days, armed with a map, to complete, so most players should be kept happy for some time.

Times Of Lore is available in the UK now.





RED STORM RISING

TOM CLANCY's Number 1 bestseller. The Russians try and take over life, the universe, mom, dad, apple pie and the American Dream. Like many MicroProse military simulations, just put the more dubious aspects of the philosophy on the back burner, and get on with enjoying the game.

You're in control of an American nuclear submarine at the outbreak of World War III. At first sight the game looks similar to *Silent Service*, but there are more differences than similarities. For one thing the weapons systems are far more advanced.

There are lots of nice touches in the demo. If the Russians win, a graphic shows the red flag rising at the White House, a sequence that had even Major Bill cramming his tongue in cheek.

Ronald Reagan allegedly asked Clancy when presented with the book, 'Who wins?'. Clancy replied,'The good guys, sir.' They're buddies now for life.

EGA RULES USA

It's sad news for Amiga and Atari ST owners as far as MicroProse are concerned. But great if you're a Commodore 64 or PC owner. The American market remains, as ever, hugely different to that of Europe. Stealey refers to the 16-bit owners as 'the vocal 10%', indicating that whilst he acknowledges their existence, the investment in software terms will not be there. The major problem as far as these machines are concerned in the USA is one of distribution.

One American journalist told me that there were only two shops in Baltimore where you could buy an Amiga, and only a handful of music shops (because of its MIDI port) which still stocked the ST. In 1987, MicroProse's market share in the States was 40% each for the C64 and PC, with the remaining 20% being taken by Apple, Mac and sundry others. It's just possible that UK games players might start buying PCs in some number when they see *F-19 Project Stealth Fighter*!

titles in one year', a vision which might be considered conservative when compared to some UK software houses. However, if past performance is anything to go by, the quality of these titles will not be in doubt.

"If Clancy was in the military he would have been court-martialled"

Stealey knows that the secret of continued success lies in investment and in engineering. On the computer side, MicroProse will continue to produce simulation software aimed at the slightly more adult audience (14-year-old males and upward), because, Stealey believes 'everyone is heading towards simulations in general'. However it's his statement 'It's a tough decision to make if you're a computer company or an entertainment company. We're kinda both' that is particularly interesting.

Of the $100 million turnover predicted for 1990, 50% is expected to come from hardware and coin-ops. It is here that some of the most exciting development is taking place.

Solid realities

Gene Lipkin is in charge of what's known as '3-D Technologies', which is the coin-op/hardware sector of the market. Impressed though he is by the two-dimensional cartoon-like graphics of current video arcade machines, he's hinting at the release of coin-ops which will revolutionise graphics and gameplay standards.

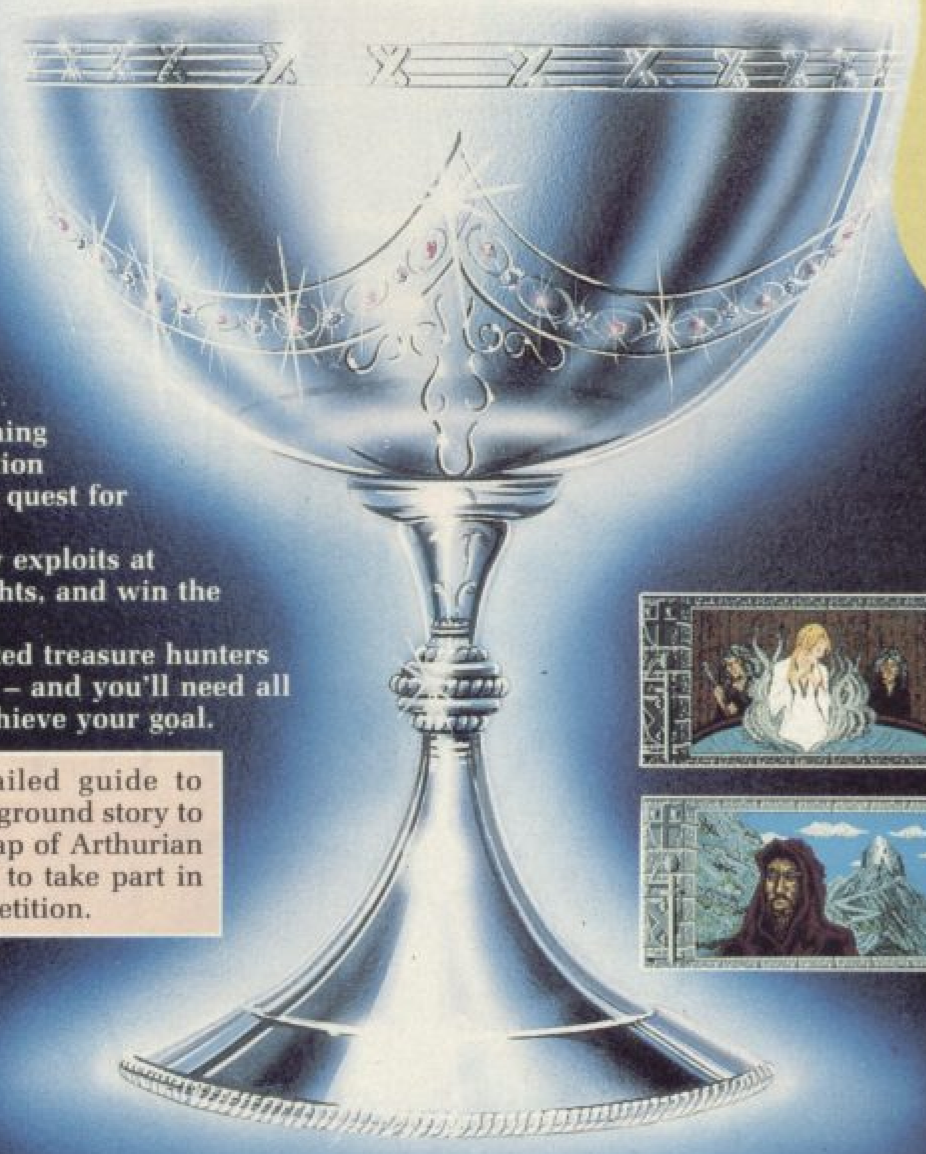
Marrying the complexity of traditional MicroProse simulations with the quick-play fun of the arcade machine, Lipkin's currently developing graphics on a computer which will allow 2,000 polygons on screen at one time, running at 30fps (frames per second). If that doesn't mean a lot to you, you'll just have to wait until you see the staggering *F-19* running on the PC with EGA – which gets by with only 50 polygons at 6fps, to realise just what sort of graphics this system could generate.

Understandably Lipkin is remaining quiet at this stage, but the first machine will be a flight game and it will hit the US arcades in the first quarter of 1989. Stealey is also hinting at a big new hardware development 'something like the movie *Westworld*' which will be revealed for the 1989 PC Show in London. Can you wait?!

Next month: John Rose goes flying with Wild Bill himself – bring a sick bag, it could be stomach-churning . . .



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Screen shots from Atari ST version

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Whatever happened to the Nintendo?

INSIDE TGM STORY

It was going to change the world and give you change out of £150. The Nintendo invasion captured America, and one in ten Japanese bought it too. But in Britain it flopped – as even its most vocal new salesman, Luther De Gale, admits – while the Sega succeeded. Now TGM looks at the plans for a second console war

'The Nintendo is solid-state Japanese culture', Luther De Gale recently wrote. Now the ex-Konami boss explains why he's putting his weight behind it

What has happened to the Nintendo? Last year the fanfare sounded, but it seems that few have answered the call. Is it doomed to go the same way as that other great Japanese computer innovation, MSX?

Although the Nintendo is alive and well, and living in the homes of 12 million Japanese and five million American families, I've only just seen one in my local computer store – and I supplied it to them! But if you want to know why I gave up a comfortable desk at Konami to champion the Nintendo cause, you obviously haven't seen the machine.

The games console is not a new concept. It was pioneered by Atari in the early days but soon eclipsed by the Commodore and Sinclair computers. Cynics might say that the same will happen to the Nintendo, with STs and Amigas on the scene today – but there is one important difference.

When the computer boom snuffed out the Atari console, programming was trendy. The deluge of computer models swamped the market, and parents hoped they'd actually *teach* the kids something. Really, they should have known better!

It wasn't long before the child prodigies learned that programming was *hard* in comparison with the sticky joys of game-playing. Education bit, the dust and a myriad of machines turned into recreational repositories of arcade madness.

All this zapped the concept of the home-computer tutor, and the only people to learn anything from the 8-bit boomer days have been the parents. A good game is one way to keep the kids from spending fruitless hours on one-armed bandits in the local arcade.

So the scene is set for the arcade nirvana machine in the home. STs and Amigas can produce pretty pictures and some of the games are hot, but they are expensive machines to buy and the software is still pricey. On the other hand, the Nintendo costs less than £100 and offers games which cannot be bought for any other machine.

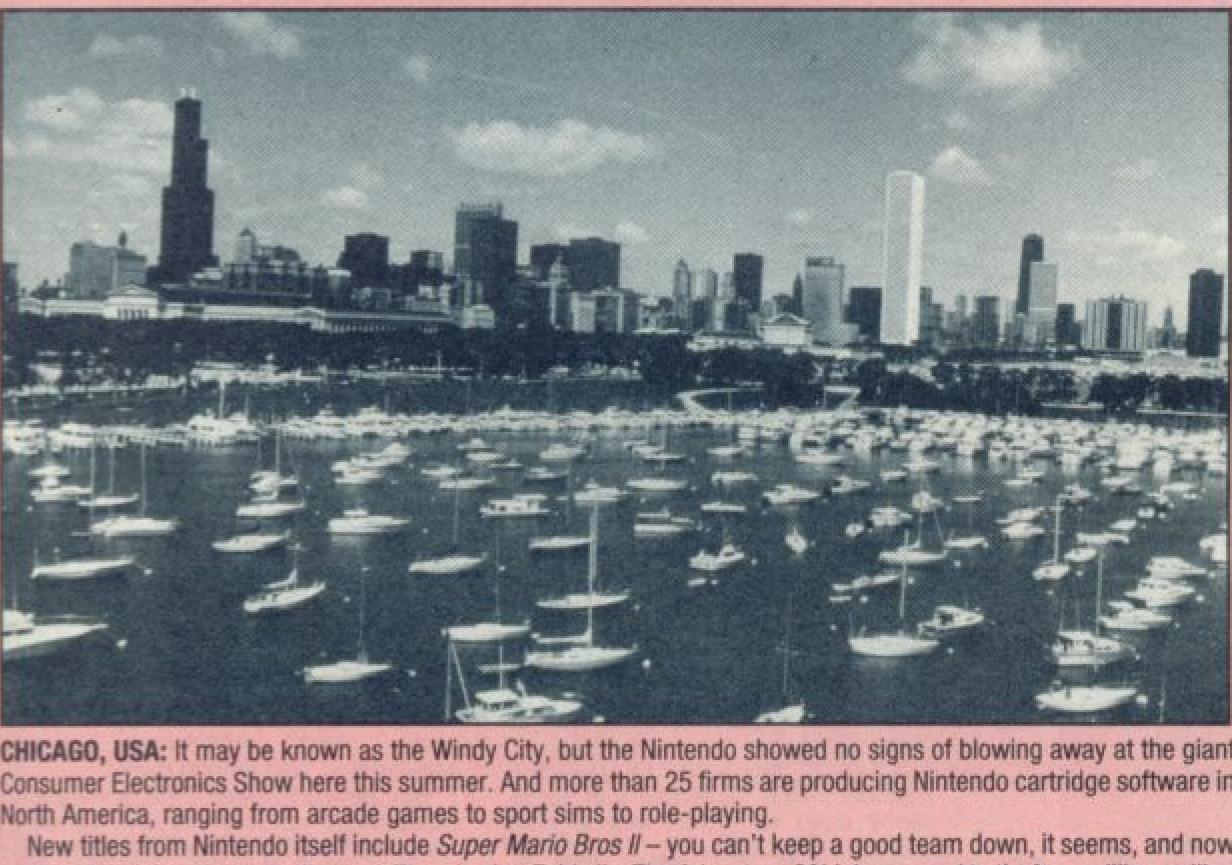
Okay, so copies and clones appear, but they're not the real thing. The Giana Sisters may drive reviewers into paroxysms of delight, but Nintendo's Mario Brothers they ain't.

Quality control?

I foresee a distinct split between the games and computer areas, where most homes have a games machine but some also have a computer.

The splitting up of these two areas already has advantages. Software houses are busy cloning games from the ST to the Amiga, and this means they're programming for the lesser of the two machines. The result: games which are barely better than anything on the Commodore 64 or Spectrum, in many respects.

Meanwhile, software houses are buying up licences to write for the Nin-



CHICAGO, USA: It may be known as the Windy City, but the Nintendo showed no signs of blowing away at the giant Consumer Electronics Show here this summer. And more than 25 firms are producing Nintendo cartridge software in North America, ranging from arcade games to sport sims to role-playing.

New titles from Nintendo itself include *Super Mario Bros II* – you can't keep a good team down, it seems, and now Mario and Luigi are back on the road. There's also *Zelda II – The Adventure Of Link*, a sequel to the two-million-selling *Legend Of Zelda* (the original is now out in the UK).

Super Team Games, *Dance Aerobics* and *World Class Track Meet* complete the wrist action from the Japanese manufacturer.

The dozens of games from other software houses included *Airwolf*, *Ghostbusters*, *Rambo: Freedom Is Everything*, *Xevious* and *Bionic Commando*.

There's also *Street Fighter*, *Platoon*, *Rampage*, *Mickey Mouse*, *Robocop*, *A Nightmare On Elm Street*, *Ikari Warriors* and its sequel, and *Marble Madness*.

Nintendo peripherals at the show included seven joysticks plus the Power Pad, for foot control! It's sold as part of the Nintendo Power Set, which retails here at $139.95 – about £80 – including the console itself, games, and Zapper Light Gun.

Read the full story in TGM**012**.

Chicago report by Marshal M Rosenthal – photo courtesy of the State of Illinois.

tendo. This means that every game is written specifically for the Nintendo and quality is strictly controlled by the mother company. As the programmers become more familiar with the machine, the games will improve beyond their currently high standard and the benefits will be reaped by the wielder of the joystick.

Nintendo life exists beyond the sticks, though. The machine already has a pistol and a game-playing robotic partner.

Commodore and Atari are busy pushing the *business* benefits of their top-line machines, so it's unlikely they'll be producing special games devices. If anything does appear it will be produced by some other company.

And time has shown that such products are rarely successful, because no-one wants to bring out software to support them. But on the Nintendo new and exciting aids will be developed as time passes.

The scoffers will point to MSX, saying that the Japanese have failed before – and that they'll never succeed in computers. This is absolute garbage: just look at motorbikes. The Japanese knew they could not develop a successful bike from scratch so they lured the best British designers, gave them loadsamoney and facilities, and told them to get on with it.

The result is virtual world domination by Kawasaki, Honda and the rest of the gang.

Nearer to the computer field, the arcades are 90% Japanese machines. A look at the software charts proves that a licensed game is the ultimate key which unlocks piggy-banks up and down the country.

Scoffers say the Japanese will never succeed. That's garbage: just look at motorbikes.

And Nintendo's policy of strictly-controlled software will ensure that once software houses gain a licence, the game won't be offered for any other machine.

Although Nintendo have failed to produce results in Britain, the interest is still so strong that arcade companies like Electrocoin are starting to push from behind. Take it from me – the Nintendo is going to take off between now and Christmas, and next year will probably be renamed nineteen-eighty-Nintendo.

Richard Eddy looks at the state of the consoles

What has happened to the Nintendo? Look through the window of your local computer shop and you'll see Spectrums, Commodores, PCs, all the computer-buying heart can desire – but n-n-n-no Nintendo. Few of the major chains stock it, either.

It's nearly year since TGM started covering Nintendo games, but there simply haven't been any new UK titles – the total collection stands at about 30, compared with 100 in the US.

Nintendo themselves recently stated that this strange disappearing act is part of their long-term plans, rather than a failure to capture the UK market.

Yet the Sega Master System seems to be doing well enough – software house Mastertronic, who are handling its UK sales, say there are approximately 40,000 Segas in Britain. And they claim to be pulling in £5 million a year from the console.

Cartridge-based games are released every month for the Sega – so far the most popular titles have been the boxing game *Rocky* and the arcade conversion of *Afterburner*. And from now until Christmas, Mastertronic plan to release roughly 16 titles.

Striking back

But now Nintendo are striking back. They've have commissioned 30 software publishers to write games for their console, to sell at about £20-£25 each. (We saw the efforts of Rare, formerly Ultimate Play The Game, in TGM**004**). And De Gale Marketing, a new company backed by top coin-op distributor Electrocoin, has also been roped in to improve British sales.

Another tactic will be advertising. This autumn Nintendo joins the likes of Commodore, Psion (manufacturers of the Organiser), Cambridge Computer and printer firm Epson on the box.

And they hope to avoid last year's fiasco, when a £300,000 TV ad campaign produced by toy giant Mattel apparently failed to produce even 100,000 sales. (See this month's TGM Report for more on the ad blitz.)

That must have been disappointing for Nintendo, which claims 12 million users in Japan and 5 million in America – the latter figure soon to double, they say.

Nintendo hope to finally get it right with a £2.2 million TV ad campaign

It's no accident that Nintendo are pushing themselves on TV rather than in computer mags – both Nintendo and Sega are anxious to avoid the techy image of computers, keyboards, machine code and all that stuff. They stress that their consoles are interactive home arcade systems.

Nintendo hope to finally get it right with their £2.2 million ad campaign. Their console has been passed from one firm to another in search of success – first to Mattel, then to US Gold's offshoot GO!, and now to their own subsidiary Nintendo Entertainment System International (NESI).

Sega Master Systems are now being sold through mail-order catalogues such as Kays, and Mastertronic is pleased with the result – but Nintendo insist it won't work for them. The console has to be on display where it can be demonstrated, they say.

Meanwhile, there's the possibility of the cheap Flare One storming into console-land (TGM**010**) – and rumours of a Nintendo II, though NESI say it won't be in Britain till 1992.

Exclusive: How Nintendo keep control

MARIO and Luigi may have put new life into consoles, but some UK software houses fear that a successful Nintendo could spell death. The reason: they can't put their 8-bit and 16-bit games on cartridge.

The console's manufacturers, based in Japan, want to keep control of all Nintendo software – perhaps because that way they can make sure Nintendo games are *only* available for the console. And if the games are good enough, that guarantees Nintendo sales.

Now, for the first time anywhere, TGM can exclusively reveal how they do it.

Last year, a small group of programmers and a computer-shop-owner in the north of England banded together to crack Nintendo's secret codes and put ordinary home-computer games on the console.

They did it – the group's ringleader, who asked not to be identified, told us 'there's no technical doubt about the system. The actual engineering has been done.'

Hopes soared. They had perfected, and planned to sell, an interface cartridge which would link the Nintendo to a disk drive or tape player. The £49.95 interface would plug into the Nintendo's cartridge-software slot.

And producing new games for the console, without Nintendo's permission, would be easy – 'anyone who can program in 6502 code [commonly used] can do it'.

But then they found the trick – a method which Nintendo has apparently used to thwart independent software producers.

Protection racket

Every batch of 50,000 Nintendo consoles has a *different chip* to read the cartridge. It's like a lock. And only Nintendo's own cartridges are the master keys which work with all the chips.

So while the British team's system worked with their own console, there's no guarantee it would work with the the one next door.

They also believe that the 'master key' design itself is different in each country – to prevent companies buying up cheap Nintendo software in one nation and selling it abroad, eating into the manufacturer's profits.

Software houses were excited when they heard of the apparent breakthrough, but cautious at the same time. 'Everyone we spoke to thinks it's a fantastic idea,' said the inventor. 'There are one or two UK companies – big ones – who would like to know what it [the master-key design] is.'

He said Activision, now Mediagenic, was among them.

But he continued: 'The software companies, no way will they upset Nintendo. And no way are we going in first, because even if we win eventually they can dump so many lawsuits on us we'd never have a chance.'

He cited the fierce protectiveness of Japanese businesses, too. Software houses which crossed Nintendo would 'never sell anything in Japan again'.

At press time, Nintendo could not be reached for comment.

Barnaby Page

Frankie went to Hollywood. Now Newsfield are too.



MOVIE – The Video Magazine. It's out.

MOVIE is the new monthly for the film and video world, published by the same people as TGM. Issue One is out this month – 100 feature-packed pages on who's who and what's what on the screen PLUS a 16-page Steven Spielberg supplement, first of a 12-part series! MOVIE – The Video Magazine. £1.90 from all good newsagents. Subscriptions available – see first issue for details.

PARTING FOOLS W
THEIR MONEY





In the second part of Mel Croucher's investigation into computerised crime, blackmailers, spies and techno–terrorists get the finger

I like coincidences, especially when they involve my own work. On 29 June I handed over my first piece on computer crime for TGM to Mission Control, Ludlow. Within 24 hours, on June 30 1988, Britain's biggest ever attempted computer fraud took place, to the tune of £32 million!

The target was the City of London branch of the Union Bank of Switzerland, and the only reason the skullduggery came to light, and was able to be prevented, was the fact that the computers handling the fake transaction broke down half way through the scam, so staff were forced to check it out by hand.

City sources say that had the heist been successful, the Bank would never have admitted that a crime had taken place. The reason for this is simple, it was an inside job. What is more worrying is the fact that computer criminals who commit inside jobs are ten times more likely to get away with their crimes than the traditional non–electronic bank robber! Bank staff tend to notice armed robbers – but much to the consternation of the bankers, electronic robbers are invisible!

Cruel Academe

Greed is not the only motive for committing computer crime. One of my favourite cases involves that sweetest of sour motives, revenge!

In 1986 a professor at the Department of Higher Education in Oregon USA requested the purchase of a CDC computer to help his students. Unfortunately the education authorities in Oregon had made an exclusive deal with IBM, and told the professor to get stuffed. Instead of the machine that suited his need, they gave him use of a handful of terminals linked to the State Motor Vehicle Department.

One night the mild–mannered academic took his revenge. He hacked into the operating system, told the program that his terminal was the master console, and called up the names of all the members of the State Administration. He then listed all of their traffic violations, unpaid fines and convictions on all the printers in the network, along with some poetic but highly obscene messages about the guys who wouldn't buy him a CDC computer.

Before he logged off, the professor wiped all the motor vehicle records (including unpaid fines) of everyone in Oregon except the State Administration staff, and finally flushed the entire system down a non–recoverable software toilet!

Record breakers

Question: why do the news headlines trumpet gold bullion robberies of a couple of million quid and bank jobs worth a few hundred thousand, yet ignore computer crimes which net *billions*?

The most serious case of computerised extortion involved ICL, when stolen data tapes were the subject of a blackmail demand and threats to blow away the ICL data bases. The biggest scale scam ever to happen in the world was a computer crime: the 1973 Equity Funding fraud, involving 54,000 fake insurance policies and a two billion dollar take. The computer theft that affected most people so far has been the destruction of the datadisks belonging to Paychex Inc of New Jersey, when the payrolls of 1,300 companies got fried, leaving 95,000 employees without salaries.

The biggest computer cock–up so far is the 24-hour breakdown of the Bank of New York's computer in November '86, when 30 billion dollars got paid out before technicians could locate the hole in the electronic dam. And still most outfits that rely on computers fail to understand what the implications are.

Let me put this simply. Most companies in the world today are dependent on computers. Computer Disasters can be triggered accidentally and deliberately, and there is nothing that can be done to prevent them. In the past five years, **80%** of computer-dependent companies have not survived computer disasters. Having put their corporate lives in the care of computers, machine disasters have killed them.

Apart from frauds and financial hanky–panky, there is also a whole range of offences concerning machines and software. The latest figures for these computer-related crimes break down like this:

Equipment theft	25%
Arson	19%
Information theft	15%
Sabotage	12%
Vandalism	12%
system penetration	9%
'Logic Bombs'	8%

Although it is heartening to know that computer crime protection is now being taught at the police training school at Hendon, my confidence is a wee bit shaken by the news that the Police National Computer has been used 'with reference to winning numbers in the BP/National Lucky Numbers Game', and to recruit new clients for dubious gaming clubs! So much for security.

Security? What security?

So, how does the blackmailer, terrorist, spy or thief gain access to the targeted computer data? Without much difficulty to be honest, or should I say *dis*honest. Intercepting and hijacking electronic data is much easier than physical burglary. And if you don't have an accomplice on the inside, don't panic, here's how it's done . . .

All electrical machinery – from a mainframe to a coffee machine – emits radio frequency interference. Radio waves are generated whenever a digital data signal changes from 'O' to '1', just as they are when a thermostat opens and shuts. Try this simple experiment: take your tranny, and tune it near to Radio 4 on your Long Wave band, then place it near your computer. Now power up and load in a program or do a bit of word processing. Your tranny should be broadcasting stolen signals loud and clear in easily audible patterns.

In location tests this week, my own word processor has been transmitting to a standard tranny up to 50 metres away, and through three brick walls, and there is no way I can prevent it without working inside a lead–lined office.

Most computers now use low–power 'schottky' integrated circuits, which bang out radio frequencies up to 300 MHz. These escape through cables and VDUs, and can be picked up as easily as radio and TV signals. As a matter of fact you can intercept VDU pictures by using an old 405–line television set between bands I and III, with a modification unit that costs less than 30 quid!

This means that all word processors, telex machines, PCs and mainframe terminals are broadcasting whatever is programmed into them all the time that they are switched on. (This applies to radiophones, car phones, dot matrix and laser printers as well.)

If a crook wants to eavesdrop on electronic information which is surrounded by masses of uninteresting garbage, for example in a large office or bank, there's no big problem. Terminals of exactly the same type each have slightly different emission frequencies, and different makes of VDUs have wildly varying characteristics. So a directional aerial can pick out an individual VDU transmission, and the professional villain will know how to take advantage of conduction along the cables, reflections from metal filing cabinets, and even be able to identify who is entering data by their typing techniques!

Crimewatch

Win van Eck, a Dutch scientist for the PTT laboratories, has shown exactly how to commit electronic burglary. Using normal a black and white TV receiver equipped with a signal synchroniser (cost £15) and a directional aerial (cost £20), he has publicly demonstrated how to steal data from a metal–cased VDU at a range of 200 metres, and from a plastic–cased VDU at a distance of one kilometre!

The implications of this are staggering. All data protection laws and practices become farcical. Banks, police stations, political organisations, publishers, hospitals – everyone using standard computers and word processors – are suddenly working in the open, broadcasting every item of data. When Win van Eck was asked to perform his tricks for the *Tomorrow's World* TV programme, he chose a well-known office block in broad daylight, and set up his gear on the pavement. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of his demonstration was that not one member of the public, or passing cop, or even anyone who worked inside the building asked what he was doing.

PRESS ANY KEY

Rear Window

As well as cheapo electronics, there are amazingly low–tech ways of stealing data. One company knew that their competitors were regularly filching their latest data, and called in a very expensive security team. After huge investigation they found out how the data was escaping: through the window! Nobody had realised that the company's terminals were facing a window opposite an empty building. The opposition had simply installed a snooper with a pair of binoculars, but the spy glasses were not even needed, you can read a decent monitor from 15 yards away, try it!

Industrial spies used to dirty their hands by sifting through old carbon paper, typewriter ribbons and shredded documents, but Pinkerton (one of the biggest private dick agencies in the world) has uncovered a major criminal network that specialises in buying old computer disks from multinationals, restoring the data using modified PCs and flogging it off to the highest bidder with devastating results.

The first survey of computer fraud in the United Kingdom, prepared by the Audit Commission, investigated 319 companies. This is what they found, the figures indicate the number of incidents:

TYPE OF FRAUD	
Private work	12
Timesharing theft	2
Unauthorised input	42
Misuse of resources	22
Theft of software	4
Theft of master file	1
Sabotage	3
Invasion of privacy	1

The total tally of all of these misuses come out at well over a million quid down the drain. But it cannot be too far-fetched of me to suggest that this is the tip of a huge iceberg.

For example, out of 319 companies it cannot seriously be suggested that only 12 incidents of private work have occurred, and that only four items of software have been stolen. From the playground to the office, everyone who works with computers knows that software is being ripped off every day, and I defy anyone that they have not illegally copied a program. Knowing this to be true, all of the other statistics must be highly questionable. We are back to the universal situation of anyone who has been ripped off is very unwilling to admit it, and that supposes that they are aware of the crime in the first place!

Spy vs spy

So how do you fight the electronic villains? Well, new computers won't help you, they emit even more signals than ancient models. Screening is impossible without spending a fortune (floors, walls, ceilings, windows, doors and cables must all be screened), and if you are part of a network, use a modem or share data, you cannot protect yourself at all.

What you can do is to modify the function of your VDU and make it extremely difficult for the interceptor to reconstruct your screen images. Trouble with this is although there is a system available (a patent has been applied for) the Ministry of Defence won't give you a clearance to find out what it is!

What you can do to defend yourself is to take out some insurance. I've been running various software houses for ten years or so, and writing about others for nearly half that time, and I can assure my readers that software is a dirty business. I'm not just talking about ideas getting ripped off, or rogue employers/employees, I'm talking about sabotage. Data going missing, mysterious fires, espionage and defections. And what continually amazes me is the crummy insurance cover that many software houses have.

If we can't get our act together in this industry, God help those who know even less about the computers they rely on. The most common mistakes in computer insurance, in my experience, are these:

MACHINE COVER ONLY: Your machines are insured up to the hilt, but the insurance company is smart enough not to cover the software, and I don't mean the cost of a packet of blank floppies! A program rewrite can scupper an entire project; sabotage or theft of software can kill a company.

UNDER-INSURANCE: Most outfits under-insure because they reckon that their back–up copies will see them through any problem. Then they make amazing mistakes like storing the back–ups in the same place as the originals, or not bothering to run the back–ups once a week.

I recently visited one very well–known software house who does not make back–ups of their records at all! If you can prove to your insurers that your back–up system is first class, and you store the copies in a fire–proof alternative location, current rates of cover are an amazing £150 a year for £7 MILLION cover! It's a bargain folks.

NO PROFITS COVER: You insure everything correctly, hardware, software, and salaries to rewrite your programsx, then disaster strikes: fire, flood, terrorist attack, sabotage, theft, mutant pixie attack, whatever the cause may be, your data is unusable. You claim on the insurance, they pay up, and you go bust within weeks! You forgot to insure against loss of your profits, bimbo. In the quote for £7 million cover, £3 million is for rewriting, and the remaining £4 million for profit loss.

BUGS, BUGGERS AND BUGGERATION: Any policy can have additional coverage for some very important cock–ups, such as the loss of your records of business and bad debts, the loss of any blacklists you keep, accidental loss of data as well as deliberate theft and sabotage, and deliberate planting of 'logic bombs' by rogue programmers.

It can't happen to you? Of course it can. The only question is how much does it matter if your favourite program gets nicked, or your current data disappears in fire or flood? It won't happen to you? That's what they thought on the 22nd floor of a London office block in March '86, when all their data got fritzed in a flood! (A fault in the air–conditioning filled the 23rd floor void with hundreds of gallons of water.)

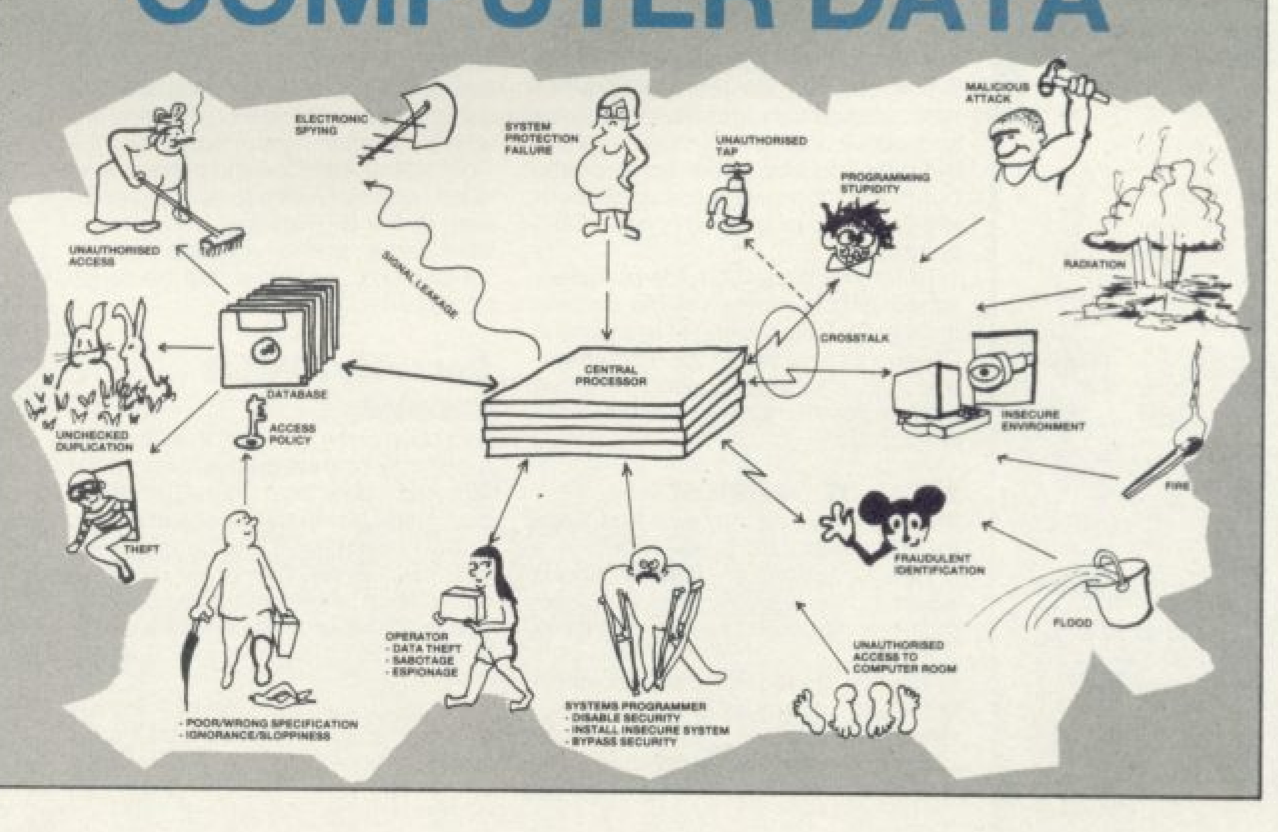
That's also what they thought in December '84 in Tokyo, when a fire in a downtown utility tunnel knocked out 90,000 phone lines, and killed off all those companies without alternative computer backup.

In 1985 I picked up a last-minute program I'd commissioned from a young gent in Coalville, Leicestershire, and drove it straight to that year's PCW Show for exhibition. The disk displayed a loading screen and then proceeded to self–destruct! I'd been ripped off, my insurance didn't cover me for anything to do with my expenses and loss of goodwill, let alone the loss of advertising, or printing the packaging.

But then, I knew it could never happen to me.

"A Dutch scientist using normal a black and white TV receiver has publicly demonstrated how to steal data from a plastic–cased VDU at a distance of one kilometre!"

THREATS TO COMPUTER DATA



CONVERSIONS: COIN OP!

A good arcade summer means a rich winter at home. TGM's expert coin-op team tell you what to watch out for as those machines which have kept us entertained all summer head for home computers in time for Christmas and 1989

'More stars than there are in heaven' used to be MGM's boast in its cinematic heyday. 'More conversions than there are stars in heaven' might be the modern software cry. But not all have been as glittery. Once there was a time when arcade conversions were looked upon as a quick buck-maker. Inevitably, public interest turned to derision as poor games, barely a shadow of their former arcade selves flooded the game shelves.

It's all different now. True, there are bound to be some turkeys flopping around, but the 1988 catchword has been care and attention to detail. It's all a compromise, as anyone will tell you, between available memory, development time and aspiration. But unlike two years ago, you can be sure that this Christmas you will enjoy loads of arcade conversions worth the price.

Whatever your tastes in coin-ops, you'll be in for a spectacular time towards the end of the year. What more can we say but get practising on those coin-ops in preparation for the home computer versions – and roll on Christmas and 1989!

OCEAN

Always a prime converter – Ocean intend stepping up their pace of coin-op licences even further this Autumn. Konami's *Typhoon* and *Salamander* are already out and about of course, but *Guerilla Wars* is another title lined up which will compete with SNK's *Victory Road* in the violence stakes no doubt.

Much excitement surrounds *Robocop*, being developed from Data East's coin-op version of the great cyberpunk movie (soon out on video). Only brief snippets of the PCB are ready at the moment, and from those, it seems *Robocop* won't just be all-blasting action. Ocean's Gary Bracey exclusively told TGM not to 'expect a straightforward shoot-'em-up'.

Okay, Gary, why not? 'From what we at Ocean have seen of the unfinished coin-op,' says he, breezily despatching a few pin-striped high executives, 'we're looking to include not only the gratuitous violence but also sub-sections where Robocop callibrates his gun by firing at targets, horizontal scrolling levels and much, much more.'

Gary's keen to point out that many of their games in development are 'graphic-intensive'. Obviously compromises have to be made where it's impossible to recreate coin-op effects – as witness the gun in Taito's *Operation Wolf*.

When it comes to recreating a coin-op, Ocean's policy of multiload stands firm. 'We're not afraid of multiload,' says Gary, 'as the person paying £8-£9 for a game expects a faithful conversion of the coin-op. After all they're buying the game on the pretense that it will be as close as possible to its arcade counterpart.'

Sound words indeed, which have been justified with recent games such as *Salamander* and *Arkanoid: Revenge Of Doh*.

Ocean are being deliberately coy about a possible licensing of the third in the *Nemesis* series – *Vulcan Venture*, but as Gary Bracey says 'it would be logical to assume – considering our close contact with Konami – that Ocean/Imagine would produce home computer conversions'.

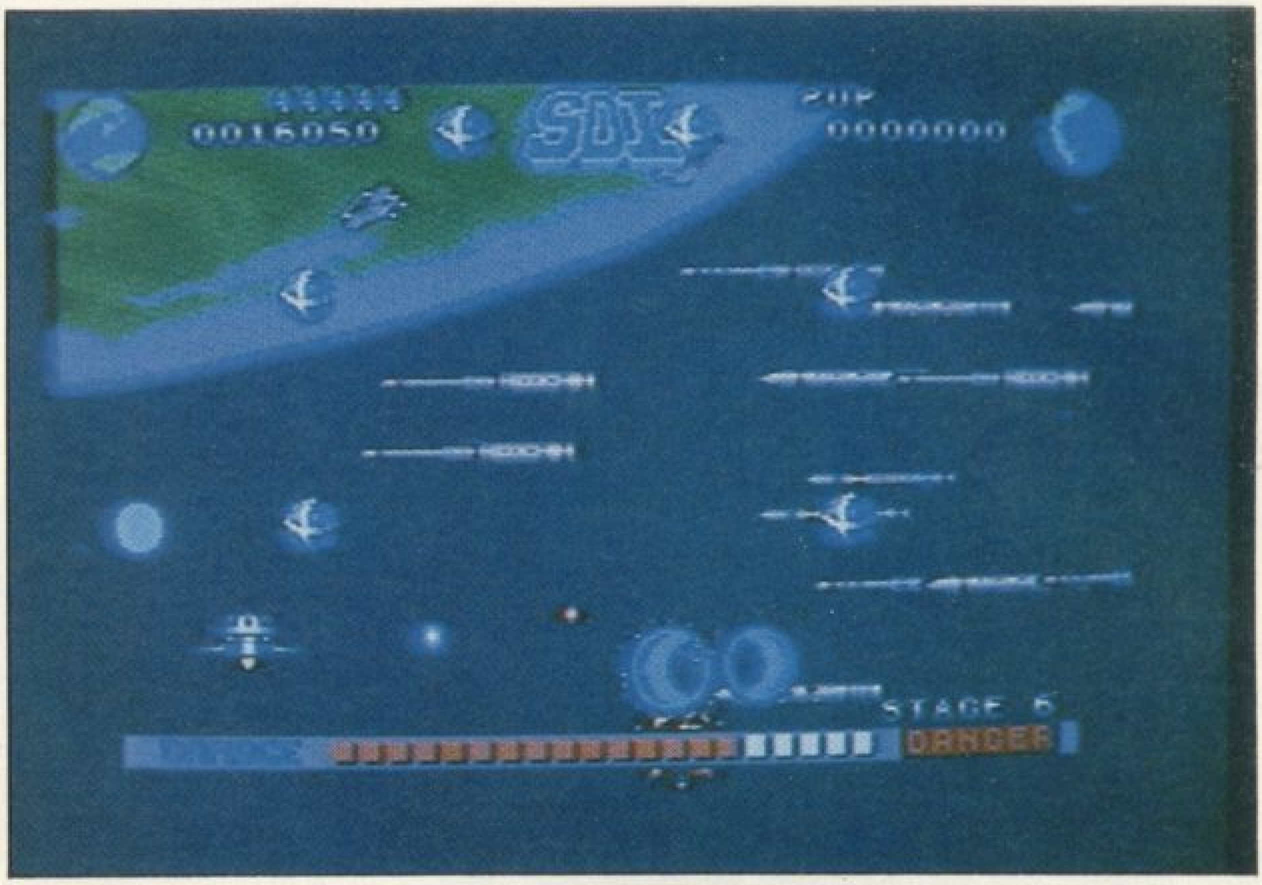
MEDIAGENIC

Formerly Activision, Mediagenic have a remarkable relationship with coin-op manufacturers Sega, judging by the rapidity with which licences to new Sega machines are snapped up through the Electric Dreams label.

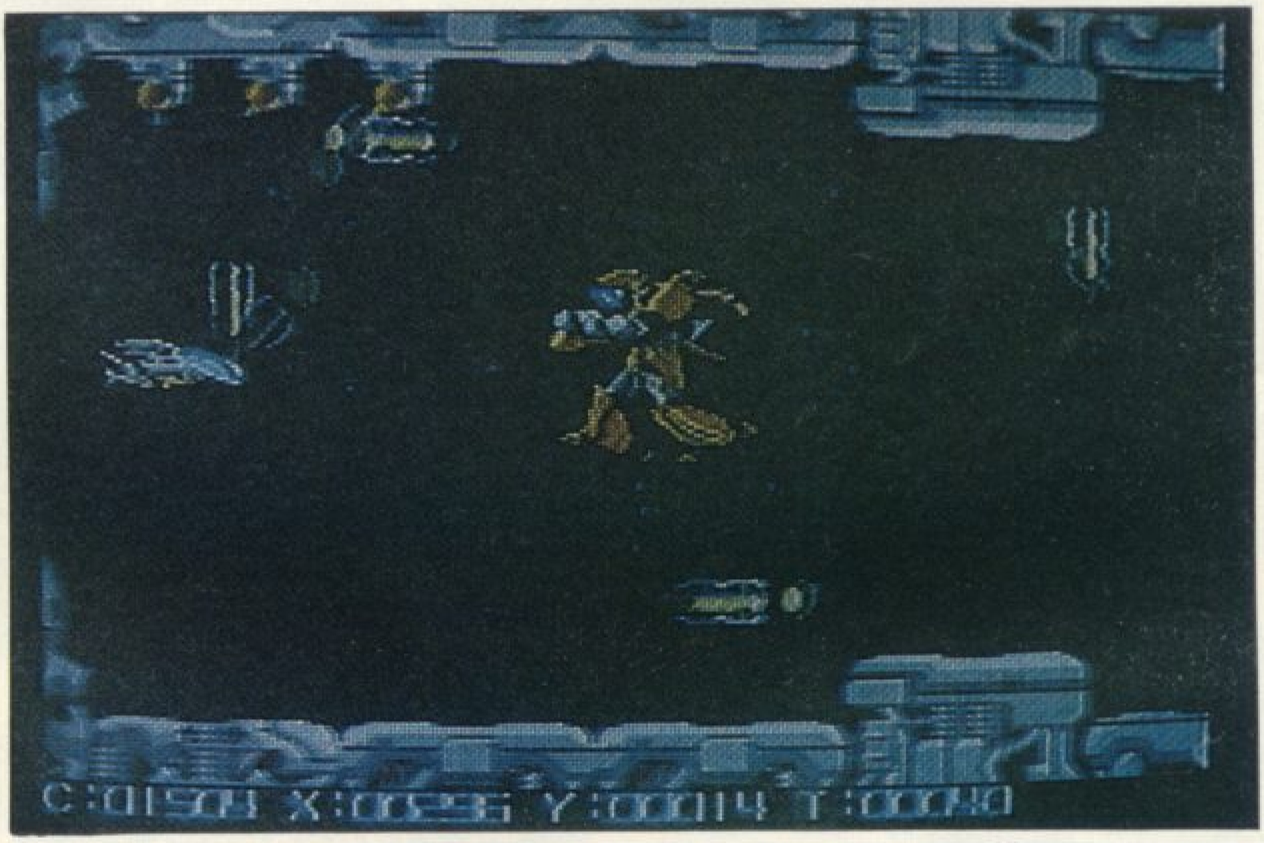
Afterburner is undoubtedly the major licence and contender for the Christmas Number 1 slot, but Mediagenic also have a host of other Sega titles. There are *Ace Attacker, Sonic Boom, Hot Rod*



Rescue the hostages and shoot to kill – everyone in **Operation Wolf** *is an enemy*



Missiles in space! **SDI***: now you can win World War III from your own home – Atari ST*


The fast action, horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up is now available for you to enjoy – Atari ST

and two spanking brand-new machines – *Altered Beast* and *Afterburner*'s space sequel *Galaxy Force*.

As a crowd-puller, *Galaxy Force* is the strongest title because – like *Afterburner* – the hydraulics are an integral part of the coin-op, more so considering the de-luxe system can rotate through virtually 360°. *Galaxy Force* is also much more of a physical experience than the other Sega games. It has extremely high-quality pictures, using the tried and trusted method of layered graphics moving at astonishing speed.

While *Afterburner* and *Galaxy Force* may capture some of the coin-op's feel on 16-bit machines, how will 8-bit versions fare? Electric Dream's Andy Percival has the answer for TGM readers: 'When converting to bigger machines such as the ST and Amiga,' he says, 'it gives us, in turn, scope for converting onto 8-bit, boosting the quality of conversion. When we convert, we look to give the player the best that they can get within their machine's capabilities.

'Obviously machine limitations are the main problem. When we looked at the arcade machine we were taken aback by the game's speed – which is what the game is all about – and this *will* find its way onto home computers. On the Spectrum, for example, *Afterburner* will have the speed but the graphics won't have the detail – although we'll give it a go at recreating the coin-op's high degree of graphic quality,' he adds. 'We're looking to suit the needs of the host machine.'

With Argonaut Software looking after the 16-bit *Afterburner* (multiformat releases due for Christmas), it should be well worth waiting for.

Other games under the spreading Mediagenic wing are SNK's *Fighting Soccer*, Data East's *The Real Ghostbusters*, Coreland's *Cyber Tank* and Sega's *Super Wonderboy*. These titles are planned for 1989 – Mediagenic have enough on their plate as it is . . .

And the platter runneth over . . . You can add other familiar titles, such as Irem's *R-Type*. This is looking extremely good on all major formats including Spectrum, and should be available around November. *R-Type*'s arcade success lay more in its graphics than gameplay – an unoriginal, horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up. It gives programmers the perfect opportunity to work on the graphics – a fact which also applies to conversions of Sega's *SDI*. Ironically, *Time Scanner* has suffered as a result. Apparently the game and graphics were all there, but the most important part of the game – the pinball movement – wasn't right, so *Time Scanner* is being recoded. Don't expect it until January. You win some, you lose some.

FIL

Among the largest of emerging French 16-bit games producers, FIL (it stands for France Image Logiciel) are going to make a considerable impact on arcade addicts – but next year, not this.

They have acquired the licence to produce conversions of eight coin-ops – Sega's *Shinobi*, Techmo's *Silkworm* SNK's *Gemini Wings* and *Time Soldiers*, Irem's *Kid Nikki The Radical Ninja* (which will be released as a double pack with another coin-op conversion, *Paddle Mania* from SNK), and two major titles: Taito's *Ninja Warriors* and the incredible *Continental Circus*.

We looked at *Continental Circus* in last month's Confrontation: Coin-Op. It uses some 3-D effects which are astonishing to say the least, and its main selling point. Work on the conversions is being undertaken in the UK through newcomers The Sales Curve, and we should be seeing all the games in the first quarter of next year under the new Rebel label.

It seems a long time to wait, but The Sales Curve's Jane Kavanagh told TGM that 'We are going to take the time to develop and fine-tune the games'. But isn't Yuletide the best selling season? we asked plaintively. 'Christmas is going to be a busy time for conversions generally, and we don't intend rushing any of ours just for the sake of a Christmas release date,' returned she. So there you have it.

The Rebel games will be appearing across the 8-bit and 16-bit range, with *Shinobi*, *Ninja Warriors* and possibly *Continental Circus* also coming out for the PC if it converts well to the other formats. We await a Spectrum version with much interest.

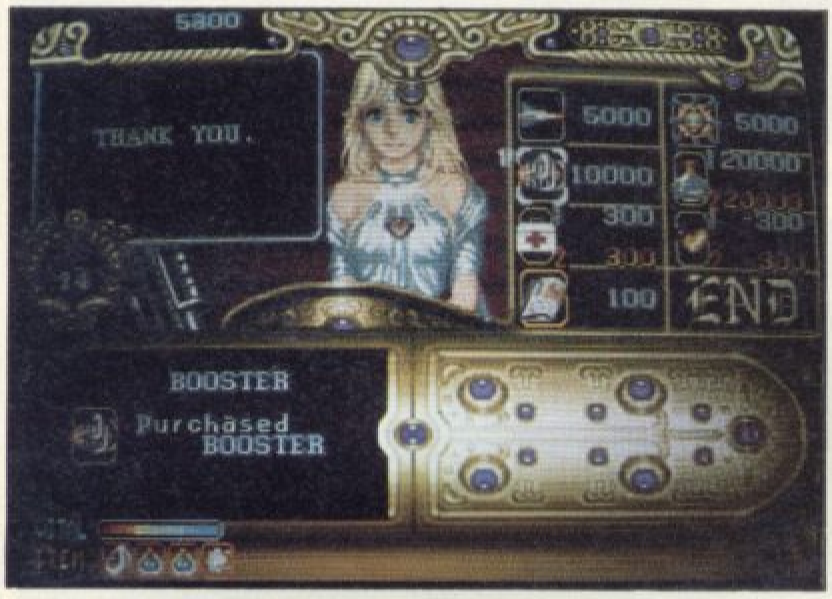
US GOLD

The Birmingham-based company had some very powerful coin-op games out last year, and this year's line-up is equally strong. Try *Thunderblades* – all formats – for starters. Tiertex are programming all versions except the Commodore game, which is written by *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* author Chris

PRESS ANY KEY



Forgotten Worlds**_may be the title of this impressive shoot-'em-up but . . . er we've forgotten_**



Butler, who also keyed *720°* and *Space Harrier* to name but a few.

Roadblasters will blam! into sight around the end of the year for ST and Amiga, along with long-awaited Amiga *Out Run*. And then its sequel, *Out Run Europa*, is expected sometime in January for all popular machines. It's still early days for that yet, the game is in the concept/design stage. Whatever its final form, *Out Run Europa* will take the idea of the car racing game much, much further, says US Gold.

They've also have licensed *The Deep*, an odd, near-obscure, little coin-op in which you depth-charge submarines lurking in the deeps, whilst avoiding mines, torpedoes and other naval and marine hazards. It's not particularly brilliant, complex or impressive a game, but in the way that poor novels so often turn into fine films, perhaps *The Deep* will make a good computer conversion.

And then there's the Capcom side of things. The only new coin-op under licence is *Ghosts 'n' Goblins 2*. It's still a preproduction PCB, but Capcom are already prepared to convert it next year. Of the existing Capcom titles, Tiertex are working on *Last Duel* and the C64 game of *1943*, with Probe writing the other versions. And Software Creations are coding *LED Storm*, as we revealed in our Capcom feature in TGM **009**.

As for the other big title, *Forgotten Worlds* (reviewed in last month's Confrontation: Coin-Op), Capcom are looking for expert programmers to embark on this ambitious project – so if you feel ready to tackle a monster arcade machine conversion, give David Baxter a call at US Gold (021-356-3388). Who knows? This could be your chance to show the world what you're made of!

● **ELITE** – best known for their 8-bit conversions of *Paperboy*, *Space Harrier* and *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* – are having a quieter Christmas by comparison with last year. As we revealed as far back as April in our feature on Elite (TGM **005**), 16-bit conversions of existing games are playing a major part in the company's year-end plans.

Paperboy pedals onto the Amiga, ST and PC around October/November. *Space Harrier 2* is nearing completion, containing a further ten levels from Sega's famous coin-op, which can be played in conjunction with Part 1 or played independently.

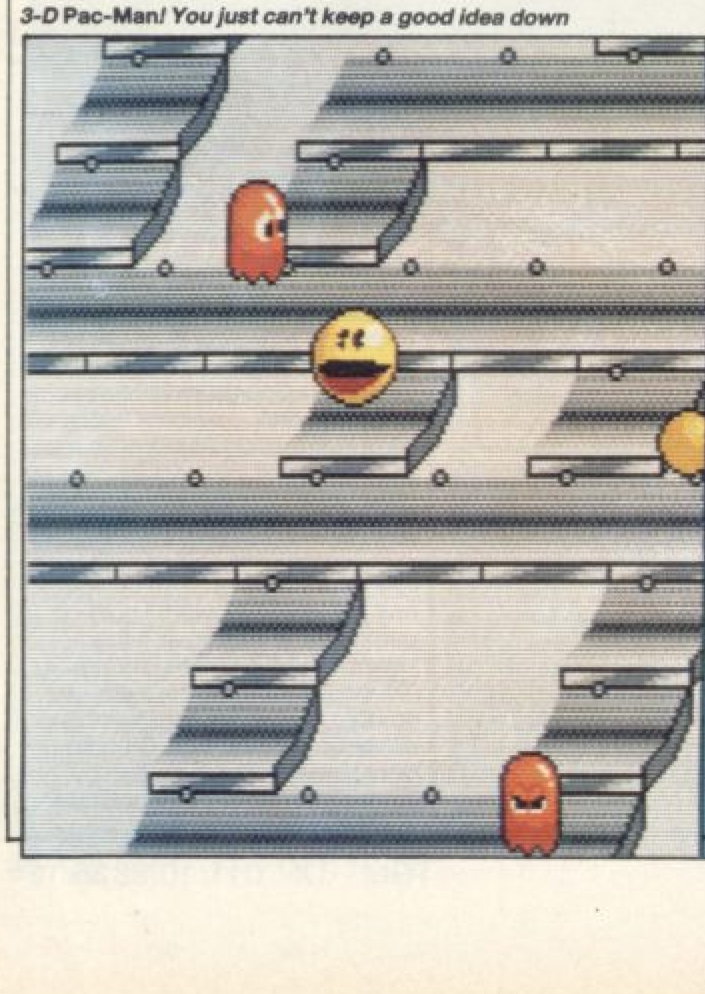
This method of releasing a sequel gets around the problems of trying to squeeze such a visually awesome coin-op with megabytes of dedicated memory into a 16-pint pot. *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* is also scheduled for release on 16-bit machines (PC included), although its release date has been set back, and as a result probably won't be appearing before the new year.

● **ACE** – coin-op-converting label of Softek – have *Soldier Of Light* well under way, and following the successful Spectrum version. The C64 version is planned for end of August, with Amstrad CPC and Atari ST versions appearing around September.

Darius, their other coin-op conversion, is a little trickier, using, as it does, three monitors to display the action. It's taking a bit longer to finish, and is provisionally scheduled for November across all formats. There are more conversions in the pipeline too, but when questioned, Ace were very coy, stating that all would be revealed at the PC show.

● **DOMARK**, never ones to hide a good licence under a bushel, are better known for all manner of games taken from the world of television programmes and films. Coin-ops are taking a backseat this year-end, only conversions of *Return Of The Jedi* due from the Wimbledon-based software house before Christmas. No other licences have been revealed.

3-D Pac-Man! You just can't keep a good idea down

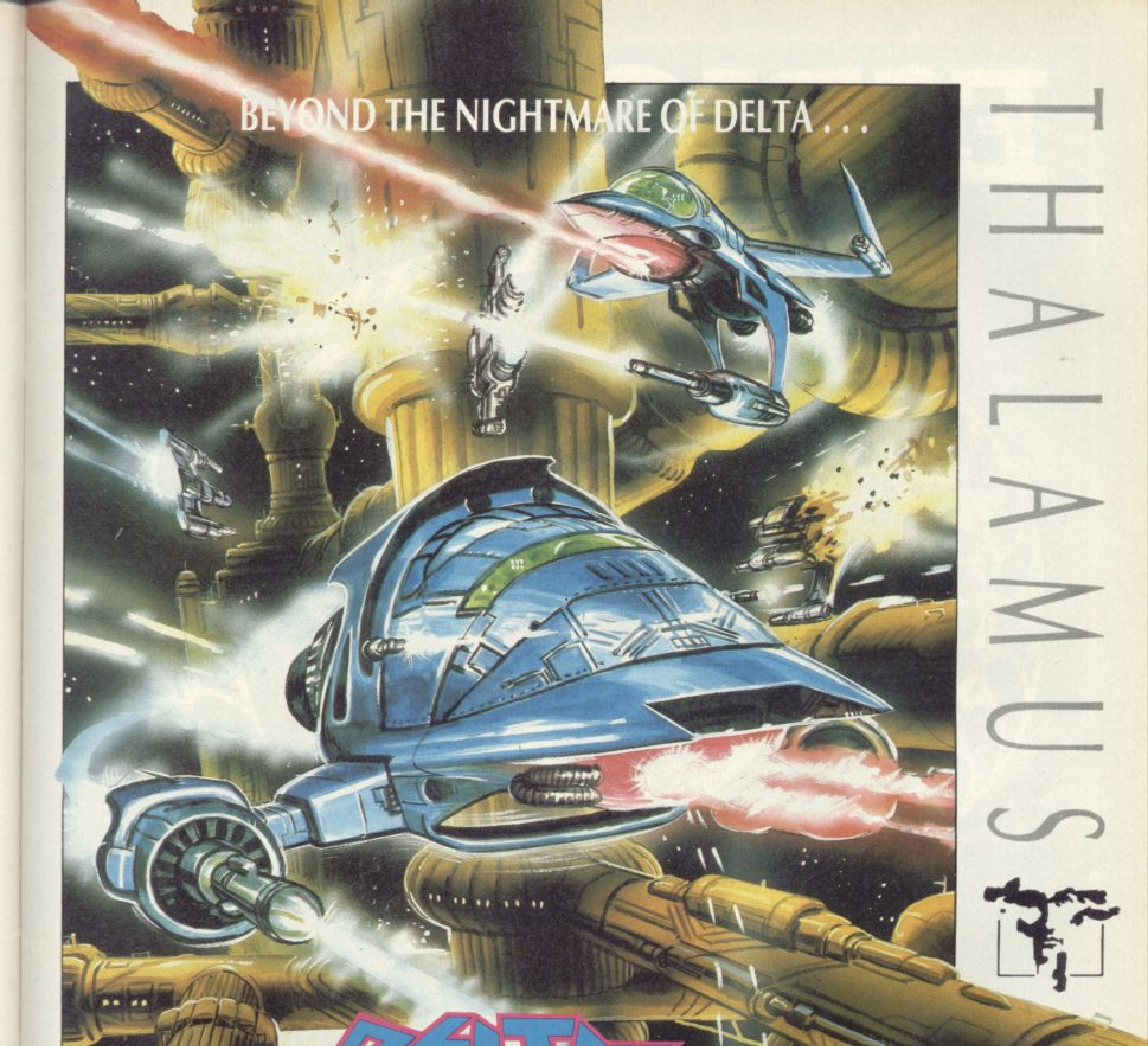




● **GRANDSLAM** are still working on conversions of *Pac-Land* (we've seen the C64 version an age ago) for release before Christmas, and busy getting next in line of the eternal Pac-Man series – *Pac-Mania*.

Atari ST and Spectrum versions of the 3-D *Pac-Mania* are looking truly wonderful, enthuses a GrandSlam employee (no names, Stephen!). In particular, the ST version is using excellent scrolling – almost half the screen width – with full use made of the machine's 16 colours. On the Spectrum, full scrolling and a yellow Pac-Man are to be found munching their way around all the mazes to be found in the arcade machine. As the anonymous GrandSlam employee admitted, 'We couldn't really get away with a monochrome pill-eater on the Spectrum, could we?'

'Course not, John.







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GRANDSLAM

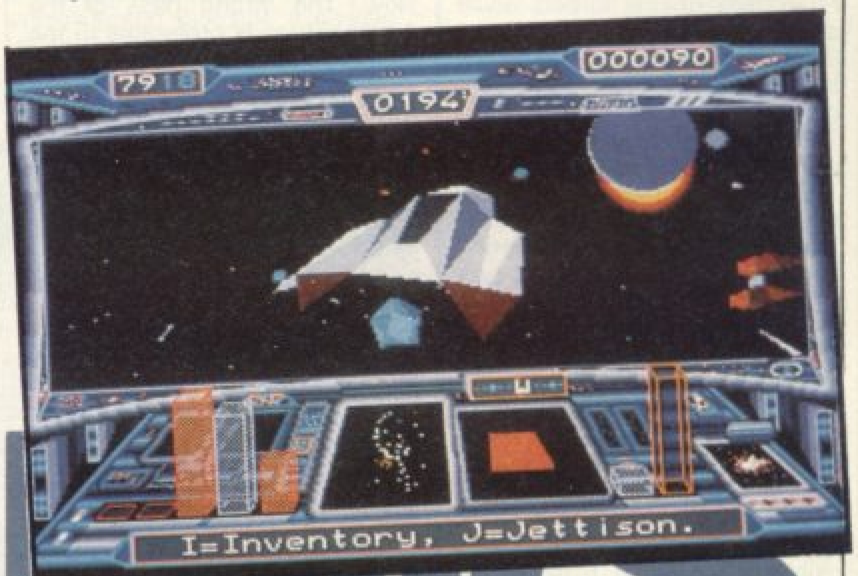
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LEAD REVIEW

64 ■ STARGLIDER II

The sequel to one of the biggest 16-bit games ever Stardrives its way to your screens. *Starglider II* wipes the floor with all previous computer games and sets the challenge for all software to meet – even if they won't advertise it!.



REVIEWS



82 ■ ELIMINATOR

Fourteen levels of incredibly tough, well programmed, anti-heroic, shoot-'em-up mayhem. In *Eliminator* you do as the game suggests – to everything you meet!

63 ■ SUPER HANG-ON

Make a meal of *Super Hang-on*'s four courses as you speed through the countries of the world trying to beat the clock.

56 ■ CARRIER COMMAND

Helping to place Rainbird firmly at the top of the software tree, Game Of The Year (so far!), *Carrier Command* cruises in on the Amiga

51 ■ HELTER SKELTER

You won't lose your mat half-way down and scorch your bum in this version of *Helter Skelter* – if you do you're playing it wrong.

75 ■ WASTELAND

Giant mutant rabbits in south America? Looks like a job for the the desert Rangers in this *Bard's Tale*-type RPG of the future.

53 ■ GUNSHIP

Take off vertically into one of the best helicopter flight sims ever – now available for your Amstrad

57 ■ BIONIC COMMANDO

Although a straight conversion from the ST game, *Bionic Commando* on the Amiga remains an incredibly addictive platforms and ladders variant.

PRESS ANY KEY

VERSION UPDATE

STREET FIGHTER

Capcom/GO!

Atari ST: £19.99
Amiga: £24.99

FIGHTING on the streets never seems to stop. Reviewed on the 8-bit machines in TGM**009** (Spectrum 48/128 60%, Commodore 64/128 65%, Amstrad CPC 73%), Capcom's coin-op conversion now hits the 16-bit micros.

Both new versions were coded by **Tiertex**, authors of *720°*, *Rolling Thunder*, *Indiana Jones* and the forthcoming Capcom release *Last Duel*.

Street Fighter pits Ryu, a skilled warrior of the alleyways, against ten other fighters in five different countries. Each bout consists of three rounds, the winner of which is the fighter with most energy left.

And if Ryu is victorious he gets to try his hand in the bonus round which involves chopping stone blocks in half.

One of the few differences in the 16-bit versions is the graphics: the large fighters perform in front of nicely-detailed backdrops, many of coin-op quality.

The only minor variation between the Amiga and ST versions is the clouds – on the ST they move slowly past, while on the Amiga they remain static.

But disappointingly most of the graphics are purely cosmetic; animation is limited and movement is slow. The strong bass of the Amiga's tune is preferable to the high-pitched whine of the ST.

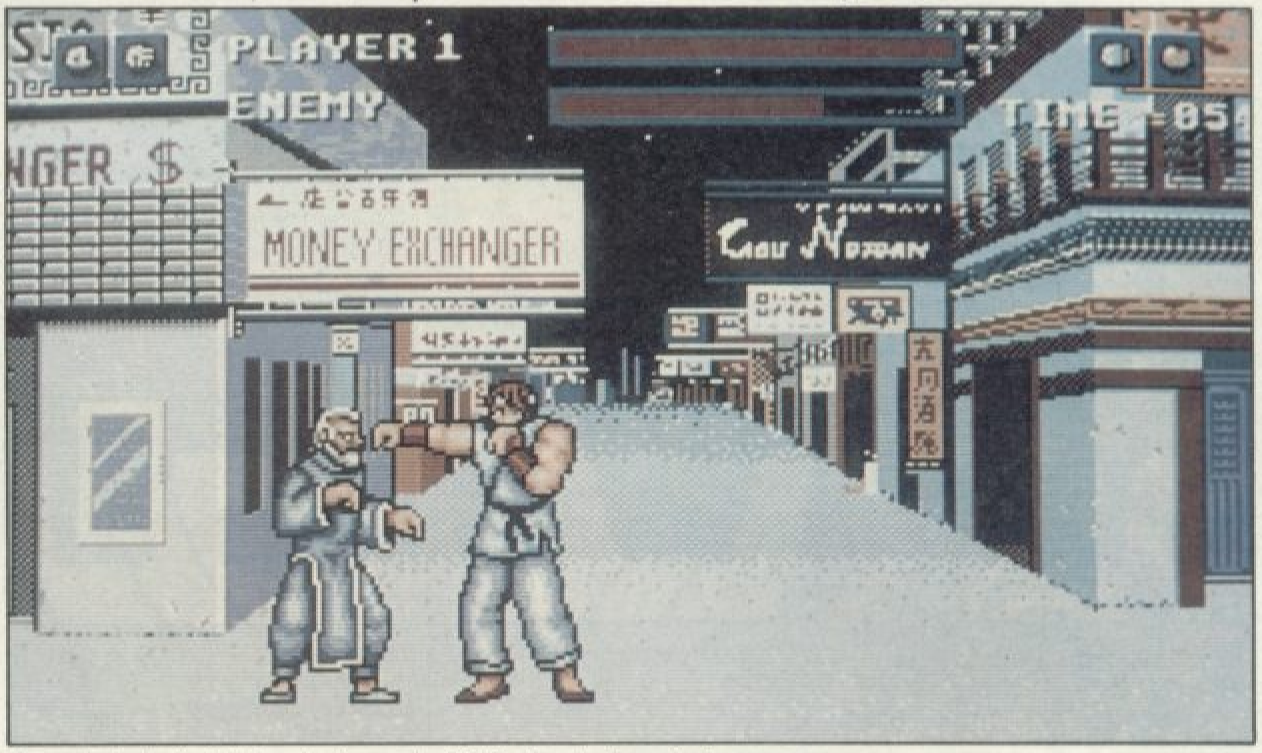
Street Fighter is too easy to master, and suffers from delayed joystick response. The ST delay is less than half a second so at least some game-flow is kept, but the Amiga is even slower making it very frustrating to play.

The converters have also lost a vital and enjoyable element of the original coin-op – the pressure pads on the arcade machine which allowed you to punch and kick at three different strengths. This device has obviously been sacrificed for conversion, and a joystick cannot hope to emulate the fun of physically attacking the machine.

Street Fighter is a prime example of a 16-bit conversion with worse gameplay than its 8-bit brothers, relying only on its superior graphic capabilities. In short, nice graphics, shame about the game.

ATARI ST: OVERALL 54%

AMIGA: OVERALL 51%



Very nice to look at but frustrating and painfully slow to play – Amiga screen

---

VERSION UPDATE

BERMUDA PROJECT

Mirrorsoft

Amiga: £24.99

THEY say lightning never strikes the same place twice, but the pilot in *Bermuda Project* might disagree. Reviewed on the Atari ST in TGM**008** (61%), the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle are revealed once again to the unfortunate aviator in this Amiga version.

You, as a top journalist, have been assigned to investigate a spate of unexplained disappearances in the Triangle. But a storm forces you to make an unscheduled landing on an island deep within the mysterious zone . . .

Time has no meaning on the island, and throughout your adventure you'll meet people and objects from all eras. By getting them to help you, or by avoiding them, you must survive to find another plane and fly to freedom.

Playing in real-time, you control the main character by mouse and option menus. Options available include EXAMINE, GET, DROP, USE, ATTACH, and SAVE/LOAD.

The small, crudely-animated hero struts mechanically around a screen which scrolls very jerkily. But *Bermuda Project* has a useful pause option and although the graphics are poor and the sound effects sparse it has some degree of depth and arouses sufficient curiosity to keep you playing for a short while.

AMIGA: OVERALL 60%



Access to the village is gained by smashing down the gates – now where did you leave that jeep?

HELL TA PLAY

HELTER SKELTER

Audiogenic Software Limited

Cross *Breakout* with a clasic Panic-style game and fertilise with a hint of *Pac-Man*, and what have you got? *Helter Skelter*, a great 16-bit game from the creators of Audiogenic's big hit, *Impact*, **John Dale**, **Adrian Stephens** and **Spiny Norman**.

Consisting of 80 screens played against the clock *Helter Skelter* features platforms and barriers patrolled by an assortment of comic monsters.

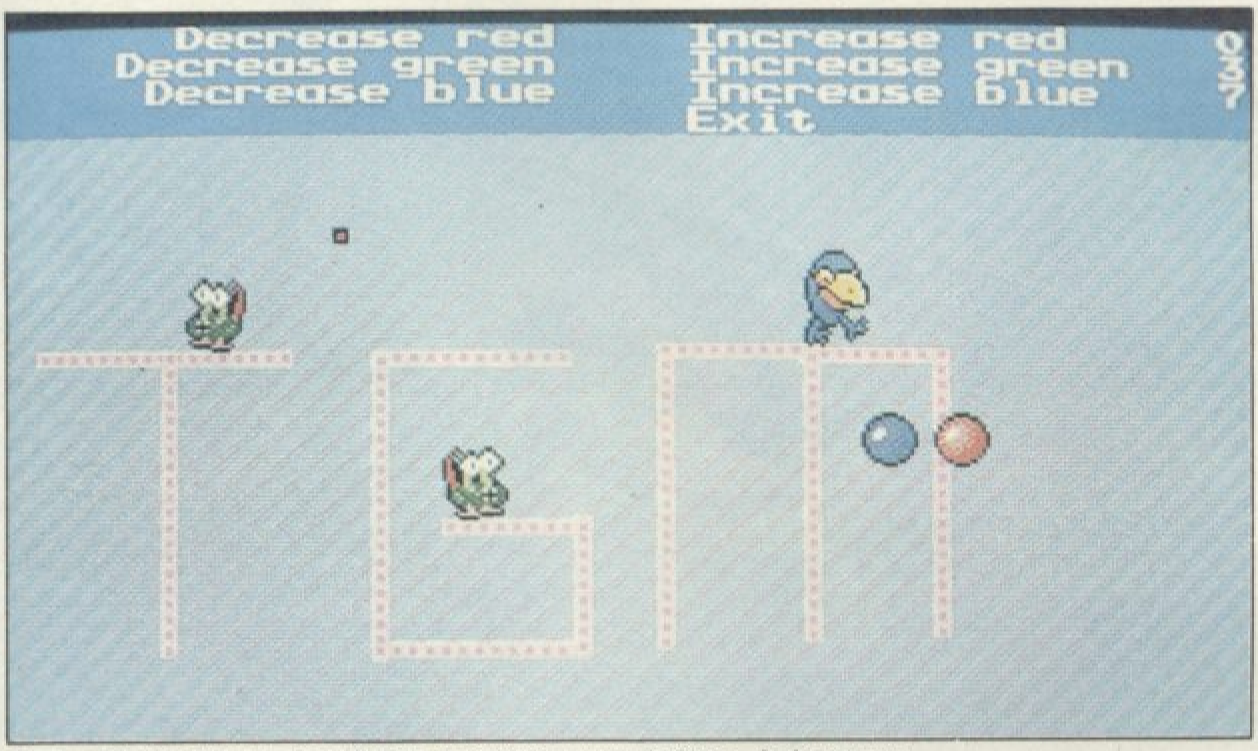
Your objective is to squash all monsters on each level before progressing to the next. You're given control of a red ball which can be manoeuvred left or right and made to bounce to varying heights. Control, whether mouse, keys or joystick, is tricky to master at first with the ball proving difficult to get to the desired area of the screen. However, as is the case with many such games, practice makes perfect.

Monsters have to be killed off in strict order. Your next victim is indicated by a yellow arrow above its head. Should you attack an unhighlighted monster, it divides leaving two mini-monsters behind – more to deal with.

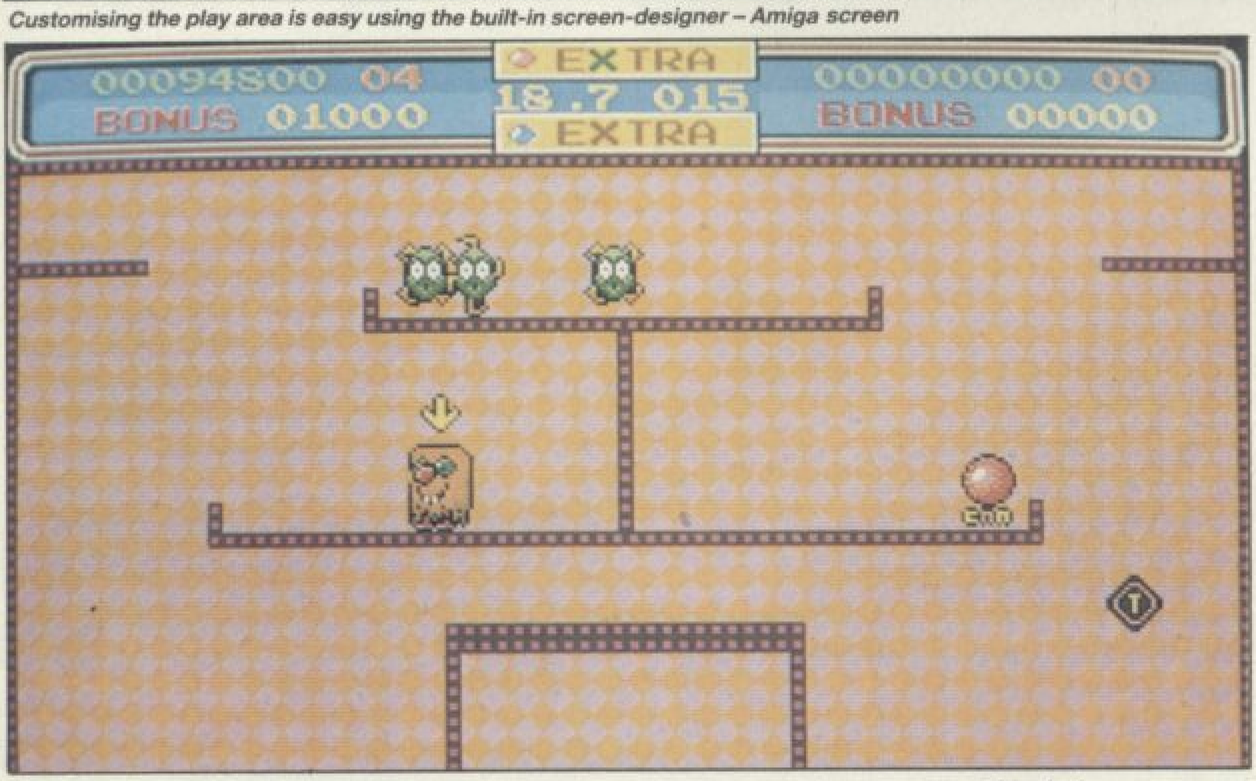
Freeze a crowd

Icons pop up throughout play which, when collected, award features such as warp, extra time, time freeze and monster freeze. Additionally, collecting the letters E,X,T,R,A gains you an extra life.

Two players can simultaneously tackle the problems posed by *Helter Skelter*, one controlling a red ball the other a blue. Screens 71 to 80 inclusive are two-player screens only, and only 70 screens are accessible when playing solo.



Customising the play area is easy using the built-in screen-designer – Amiga screen



Go for the monster with the arrow above his head, if you don't you'll have twice as many to fight – Amiga screen

Creator Skelter

If you're not content with the 80 screens already available in *Helter Skelter* you can create 48 more using the built-in screen designer. This allows you to custom-build screens – from choosing background colours to deciding the speed of the monsters' movements.

The designer is mouse-controlled, using an on-screen pointer to select menu options. Platforms can be added or deleted and co-ordinates are displayed to make planning your screen easier. Monsters can be placed wherever you wish and their direction and speed (on a scale of 0-7) chosen. You may then select start positions for the balls, skill levels and bonus scores. The designer is easy to use and complements the game very well.

Every ten screens a password is given from where the action may continue when a new game is begun.

The *Impact* authors have created an excellent game in *Helter Skelter*, one which compels you to see just one more screen. The gameplay is enjoyable and particularly rewarding when a level is completed.

ATARI ST, AMIGA
Diskette: £14.95

Both versions are identical, right down to the passwords used. The graphics feature a cartoon style humour which makes the game incredibly addictive to play, and the sound is similar to Impact **in both spot FX and the occasional short, but sweet jingles, with a digitised voice yelling out to indicate when a letter appears on-screen.** Helter Skelter **is one of the most fun games of the moment, and at a nice price too.**

OVERALL 87%

OTHER FORMATS

Plans to release 8-bit versions depend on how well the ST and Amiga games sell.

"An excellent game, which compels you to see just one more screen"

PRESS ANY KEY



FIVE FIST-FULLS OF
ROY OF THE ROVERS
NEWSFLASH! Four of the Melchester Rovers five-a- side football team have been kidnapped... hours before a crucial fund-raising game to save their ground from grasping property developers. Time is running out and player-manager Roy Race MUST rescue his team-mates, dodging danger, escaping ambushes and boobytraps in order to play the most important game of his career!
CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
GARY LINEKER'S HOT SHOT
The most realistic football game ever produced for your computer. Play in a full-scale eleven-a-side football game complete with sliding tackles, throw ins, corners, goal kicks, fouls and even the dreaded referee with his red card. With all these features to watch out for will you have what it takes to match the shooting skills of England's top striker in Gary Lineker's Hot Shot.
CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk IBM PC £19.99 disk
AMIGA £19.99 disk
SUPERSPORTS
As varied and as bizarre a collection of unique sporting events as you are ever likely to find. Have you got a good enough eye to be a 'crack shot'; the nerve to attempt the 'devil dive'; the strength to 'smash slates'; the accuracy to shoot the 'cross bow'; and finally (and unbelievably!) triumph over an 'underwater assault course'. Up to four players can compete in this outrageous challenge!
©FLEETWAY PUBLICATIONS
Roy of the Rovers
Gary Lineker's Hot-Shot!
SUPERS
GREMLIN
OH NO!! THE TEAM HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPED AND THE PROMOTERS MAY PULL OUT...
Screen shots from various formats.
Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House,

SPORTING POWER

CBM 64/128
£9.99 cassette
£14.99 disk

AMSTRAD
£9.99 cassette
£14.99 disk

SPECTRUM
£7.99 cassette
£12.99 disk

GARY LINEKER'S SUPERSKILLS

Hot on the heels of the hugely successful Superstar Soccer comes Superskills, again endorsed by England's star striker. To command a permanent place in the national team means dedication – dedication towards hard work and training. The national coach has designed an extensive training programme which will improve your fitness, ball control, sharpness and accuracy. Can you prove yourself to be both physically and mentally agile and alert?

CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk

ULTIMATE GOLF

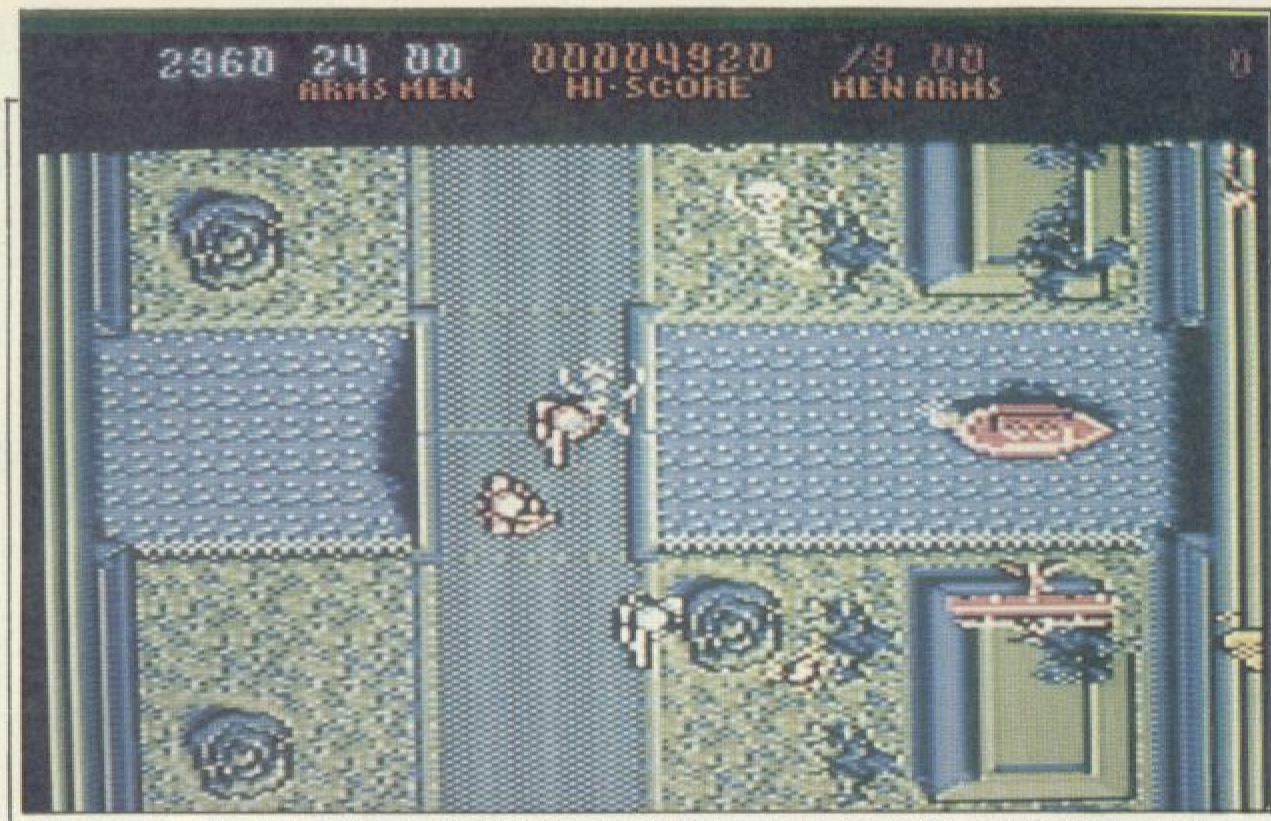
The ultimate golf simulation for your computer. See how different shots affect the way the ball is hit. Let the computer determine your skill level. Perfect your technique by following the example of the computer golf player. A must for all enthusiasts who've tried their hand at computer golf but never met a challenge as testing and enthralling as Ultimate Golf.

CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk
IBM PC £19.99 disk
AMIGA £19.99 disk





10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423.



Fighting your way to the top of the screen to blow up one of the many bases and so weaken Fernandez's power

DESPOT MEASURES

FERNANDEZ MUST DIE
Imageworks

Tony Crowther is a British Commodore programming name to reckon with. He's worked for as many software houses as most of us have had hot dinners, Alligata and Gremlin Graphics being just two such. A recent title was *Zig-Zag*, designed by **David Bishop**, who also cooperated with Tony on this game.

The overthrow of a democratic government and the establishing of a dictatorship by General Fernandez has thrown the state of El Diablo into chaos. The countryside is crawling with soldiers as a small truck deposits democracy's last hope . . .

To successfully overthrow the dictator you must find and destroy the eight military posts which form the base of his power in the land, then assassinate the despot himself. Before you can get to him, however, you face the full force of the state's military: paratroopers, bikers, tanks, trains and even battleships all aim to prematurely terminate your mission.

Jeep at half the price

Armed with grenades and a machine gun, survival is tough unless you can steal a jeep. Once in the driver's seat you speed along with a second player manning the machine gun. Unfortunately the battleground is divided up by huge, impenetrable walls so a jeep won't get you everywhere.

Once out of the jeep you lob grenades at doors to access other areas, earning points and medals for liberating any prisoners you see in the secret passageways, and for collecting gold.

In the main part *Fernandez Must Die* looks and plays much like another *Commando*-clone, but bolted-on special features make it nonetheless very worthy. The simultaneous two-player game is good, while the strategy comes in plotting your route to the eight bases and mapping those exits not shown on the map.

Fernandez Must Die is to include a badge and a humourous map of the world in its packaging.

COMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £12.99

A pleasant intro tune sets the scene for some nice graphics. The battleground graphics are rather bland, utilising washed out colours, but the secret passages are better and the sound FX effective. An average *Commando*-type game with an above average two-player mode.

OVERALL 71%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are due for Spectrum 48/128, Amstrad CPC (both £9.99 cass and £14.99 disk), Atari ST and Amiga (£24.99). These are all due by the beginning of November.

"An average *Commando*-type game with an above-average two-player mode."

VERSION UPDATE

DREAM WARRIOR
US Gold

Amstrad CPC Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £14.99

THE nightmare continues. Following a mediocre Commodore 64/128 game (TGM**009**, 51%), and even worse PC and Spectrum 48/128 versions (TGM**010**, 27% and 29%), *Dream Warrior* now goes bump in the night on the Amstrad CPC.

Scientists just can't stay out of trouble, it seems, and here the objective is for you to rescue three fellow researchers from the clutches of the world-dominating Focus Corp. Two are imprisoned in the offices of Megabuck Inc, perhaps a futuristic subsidiary of US Gold, and another on a giant two-headed snake the size of a planet.

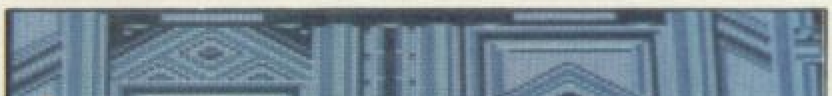
The battlegrounds are dreams, and if you fail you'll wake up insane – like all the other people who have fallen foul of Focus' dream demon weapon, and probably many of those who bought the PC version.

The game begins in the offices of Megabuck Inc where you shoot small demi-demons and collect the glowing globes they deposit: Blue globes build up images of your companions, who can be rescued when their image is complete.

Gameplay on the snake-planet also involves shooting demi-demons. And a black hole is concealed within the battlegrounds, where Occular – the ultimate dream monster – can be found and defeated to finish the game.

The Amstrad CPC version has reasonable graphics, but sound is restricted to an effective gunshot effect. And the aliens are very slow-moving, making play painfully laborious. This is a bad version of a poor game – let it sleep in peace.

AMSTRAD CPC: OVERALL 29%



The aptly named Dream Warrior *is a great cure for insomnia*

VERSION UPDATE

THE GREAT GIANA SISTERS
Rainbow Arts

Atari ST: £19.99

THERE'S no clone like a good clone, and we've already welcomed the Giana sisters on Commodore 64/128 and Amiga as simply-presented but addictive cousins of those Mario guys. (The 8-bit version received 82%, the 16-bit 78%.)

The objective is for Giana to safely pass through 32 stages and collect a magic diamond – presumably a magic girl's best friend.

Standing, flapping and bouncing in her way are snapping lobsters, irritable owls, disembodied eyes and rough tough spiders.

It may be a bit unladylike, but Giana can try to jump on these obstacles and flatten them. And between owl-squashing sessions she can turn to a touch of gentle head-butting: bashing special rocks earns extra lives.

In the two-player version, Giana takes turns with her sister Maria, rampaging through alternating sequences of arcade action.

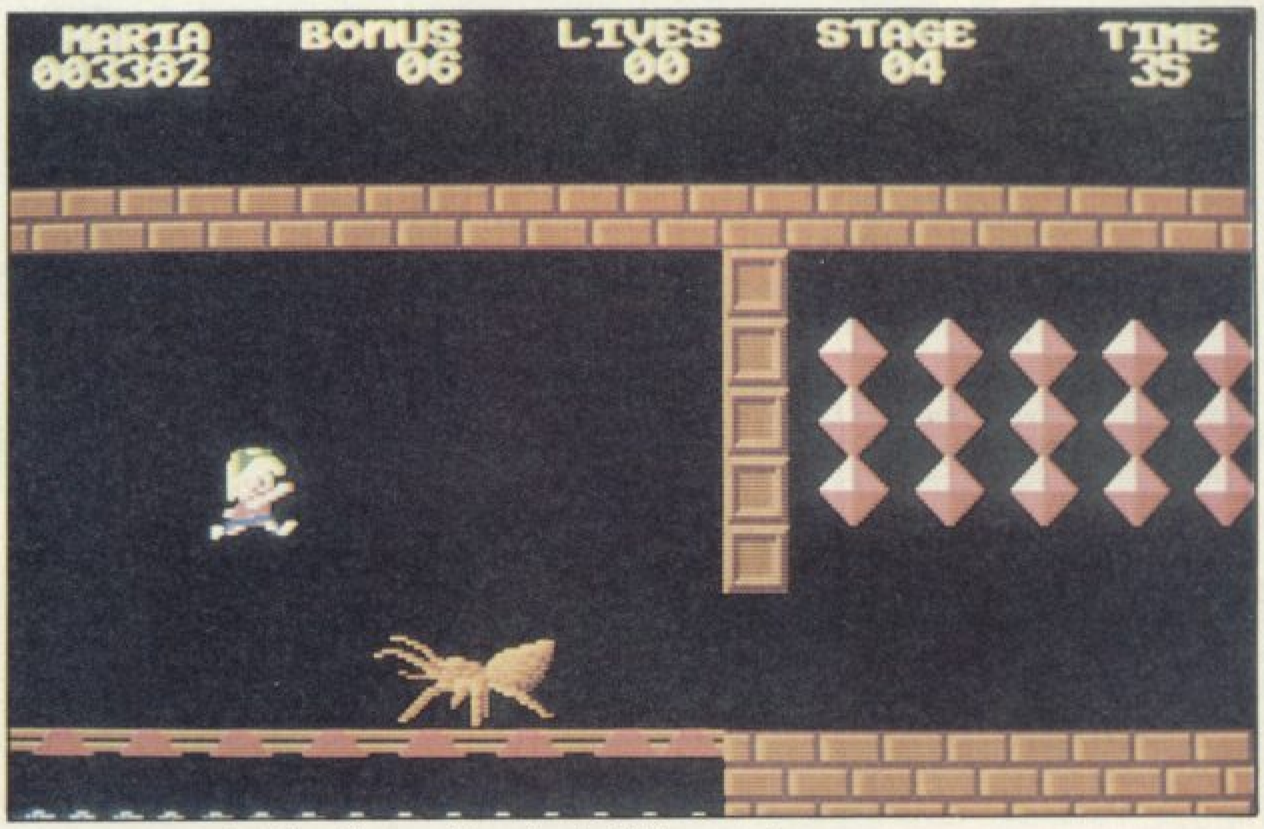
A firewheel turns Giana or Maria into a punk who can smash stone, lightning gives her lethal dream-bubbles to spit, strawberries make the bubbles home in on enemies, clocks put creatures to sleep, magic bombs have the same effect as smart bombs, water-drops help with fire and a lolly gives an extra life.

Also on the *Super Mario Bros*-style screens are warps to higher levels, hidden chambers and an unlucky dragon called Fucha.

The ST version recreates the simple graphics of the Amiga almost exactly, and imitates its continual tune as well.

The scrolling introduction is amazingly fast here, yet strangely once the main game starts flip-screen techniques disappointingly take over. This can be irritating at times, but doesn't seriously affect the compelling gameplay – highly recommended for *Super Mario Bros* fans.

ATARI ST: OVERALL 75%



Down in the depths the daring Giana must face all sorts of hideous creatures

VERSION UPDATE

TANGLEWOOD
MicroProse

Amiga: £19.95

UNCLE ARTHUR's lost the papers proving his planetary mining rights. And they've become extremely valuable since the discovery of Dog-Crystals and Ice-Emeralds. The planet's T'ngl-y-wd, and TGM visited it before on the Atari ST. The review (TGM **003**) slapped this innovative arcade adventure across the wrists for an irksome control method, which on the Amiga is marginally improved.

The company Uncle Arthur bought the rights off now claim they never sold them, and have reactivated their base on the planet to resume mining. Uncle Arthur's only hope is to find the papers. But his computer-controlled mining mobiles are – to say the least – antiquated. He needs someone who's a whiz with computers . . .

Having accepted the job (after all it could make you rich) you are confronted with an overhead view scanner set in an archaic console, which provides information on a teletype machine.

A window announces found items with a mechanical bell, and accessing data on the mobiles is done by flicking switches. Using the mouse to manipulate these systems gives a unique, and atmospheric sense of some Victorian-styled future. Control of the mobiles (all of which have different capabilities) remains difficult, however, and even with a direction arrow added, practice remains essential to gain full control.

To get Uncle's papers you have to explore the environment, picking up objects to repair mobiles, trade with the natives and so on. The overhead view is perfectly mapable, but in certain places – such as Tanglewood forest – you switch to a first-person viewpoint which, maddeningly, isn't. In the Treetops this can lead to the plug being pulled on the game as save/load functions are not available in such places.

The Amiga version is very similar to the ST one, but that's no bad thing with such attractive graphics. One of the best 16-bit graphic adventures around – if you've the time and patience.

AMIGA: OVERALL 79%

Mobile five walking on water searching for those elusive dog crystals



THE ULTIMA COMPUTER RPG?

ULTIMA V
Origin Systems/MicroProse

Britannia suffers a hell of a lot. It must – it's featured in four *Ultima* games already! Origin are known for their strategy and role-playing games, from the cybernetic tank of *Ogre* to the mystical oriental magic of *Moebius*. But best-known for the *Ultima* series, a more traditional sword and sorcery setting for an RPG. Subtitled *Warriors Of Destiny*, the fifth episode now reaches the computer screen.

If you have played *Ultima IV*, you can load in your saved character, otherwise one must be created. This is done by visiting a gypsy, who awards you character attributes according to your replies to moral questions. The eight virtues are Honesty, Compassion, Valor, Justice, Sacrifice, Honour, Spirituality, and Humility – celebrated by towns named after them. Your aim in the *Ultima* series is to increase these personal attributes.

But more immediately important to the player are the standard RPG variables: experience, health, strength, intelligence, dexterity and magic levels, hit and experience points – and Britannia's appalling troubles . . .

You have been summoned, once again, from modern-day Earth, by the power of a Codex medallion to Britannia. Your knight friend Shamino greets you, but almost immediately is wounded by a trio of Shadowlords.

Your Ankh amulet frightens them off, leaving you to support the weakened Shamino on the short eastward journey to Iolo's humble home, where he tells you what's up.

An attempt to raise the Codex from its resting place in the Abyss, resulted in the breaching of Britannia's crust. A cavernous void, linked to the Underworld, opened. It's a breeding ground for monsters far worse than those which previously roamed Britannia, just waiting for the opportunity to wreak havoc throughout the land.

A tunnel was discovered, which provided an entrance to the Underworld. Lord British and six knights set off to explore it, but only one knight returned, for even these skilled fighters were no match for the atrocities they found, and the exulted leader is feared dead.

Blackthorn has taken over, and under the influence of the Shadowlords – hooded figures with spooky, glowing eyes – has become a tyrant. All men of good faith have been banished.

As Shamino slowly regains strength, Iolo tells you of the horrific consequences of the Codex's retrieval. You have been summoned, at great risk to those responsible, to lead a quest to find Lord British, and to help him restore peace and democracy – if he still lives.

Happy talking

Your party of three is displayed in the plan-view landscapes as a single figure, together with the party list, command area and party assets panel which make up the RPG elements. Movement – joystick or cursor keys – is in the four compass directions. Commands are entered on the keyboard – 26 are used in the game. One in particular is very useful: your party may be expanded by having a friendly TALK with a character. His joining you will be of great use in venturing into the dark and dangerous Underworld beyond Spiritwood.

Combat is inevitable during your exploration of both Britannia and the Underworld, and an expanded view of your location is then given, each character now shown individually. Control cycles through your party members, one action, offensive or otherwise, made per turn.

Selecting ATTACK brings up a cursor which may be pointed at the target, provided it lies in an adjacent movement square. Slaughtered enemies may leave behind treasure, food or magical items, which are obtained by the GET command.

Spells may only be cast by characters with sufficient magic points, which also determines their sophistication. There are eight orders of power, and each of the 45 spells needs a mixture of ingredients and magic words. Objects imbued with magical properties can be easily Used, needing no special processes.

Presentation, both in the program itself and its packaging, is excellent. The box includes a cloth map of Britannia and a Codex of Ultimate Wisdom coin, to supplement a detailed *Book Of Lore*, which tells of all aspects of Britannian life, and two player reference cards.

Arcade players could gain hours of enjoyment from this, opening the area of role-playing games to them with one of the best of the genre now available.

PC Diskette: £29.95

Good use is made of the EGA card. Atmospheric stills accompany the introduction and character-creation text, and colourful characters match the pleasant scenery of the main game. The strange land is full of yet-stranger creatures, from which both useful and obscure statements can be drawn by careful use of the TALK command. They add interest to an already enthralling game.

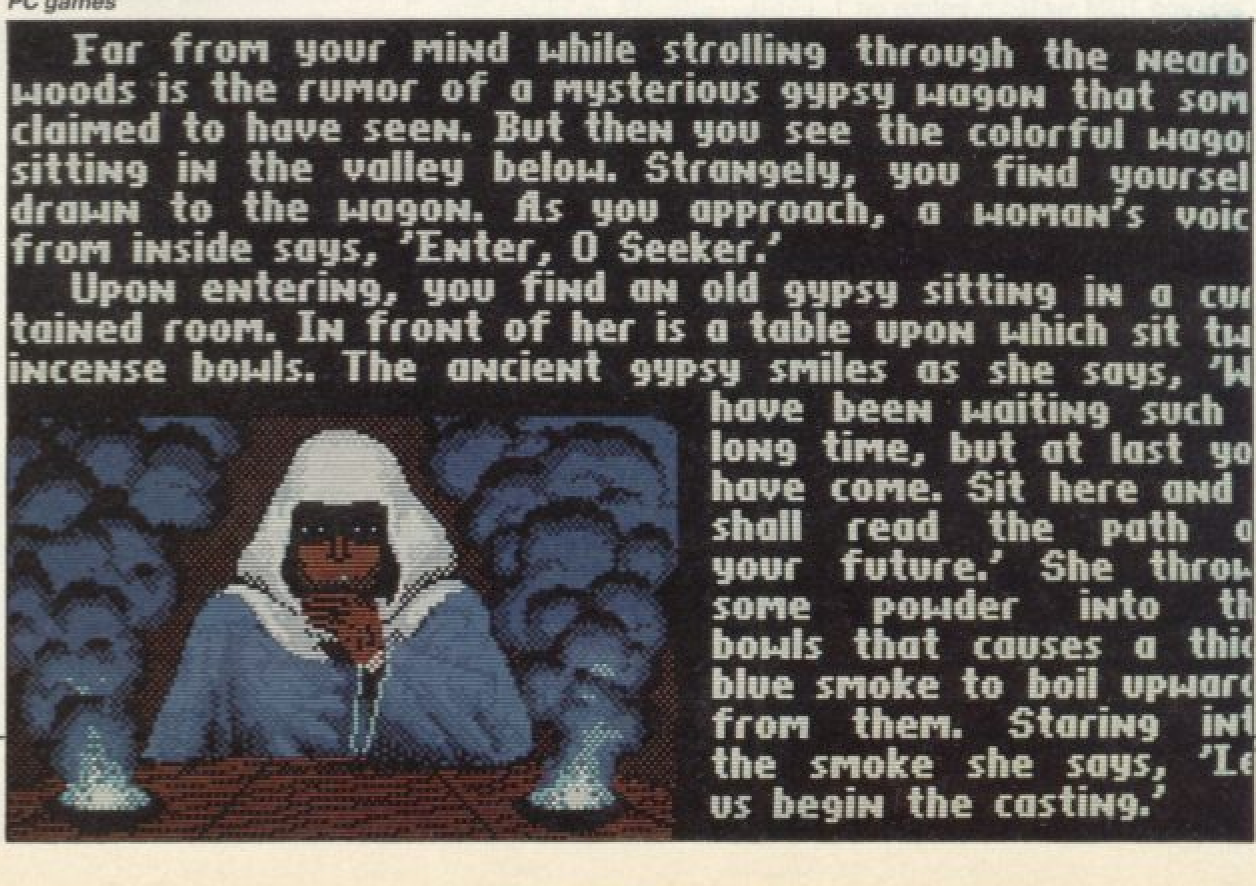
OVERALL 91%

OTHER FORMATS

A Commodore 64/128 game is due for release in mid-September, disk only at £24.95, with Amiga and Atari ST formats expected toward the end of October, price £29.95

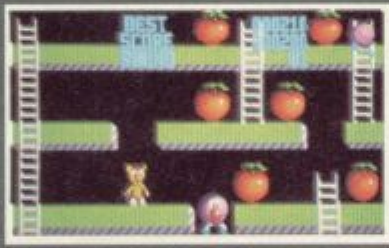
"Arcade players could gain hours of enjoyment from this, one of the best of the genre"

Looking more like an adventure than a roleplay game, Ultima V *wreaks of atmosphere and sets a high standard for future PC games*



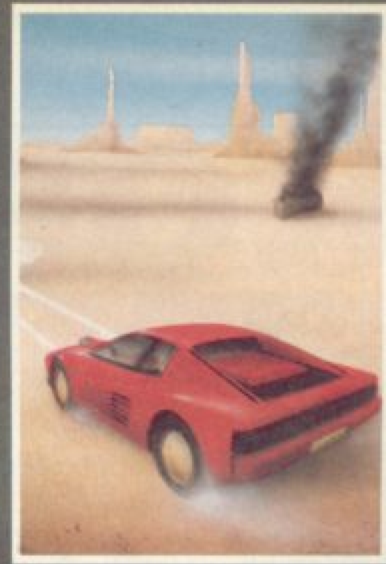


ROBBEARY
Bertie, an agile and clever bear has targeted a famous 24 floors store for his last and most daring ROBBERY. With no alarms or visible guards and fabulous treasures, yet it has been avoided like the plague by the criminal fraternity. Bertie soon discovers why?
AMIGA £19.95

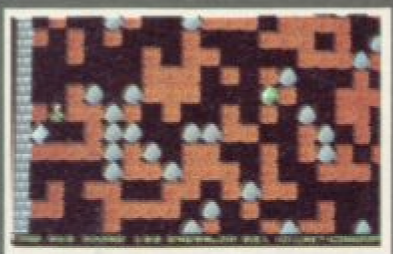


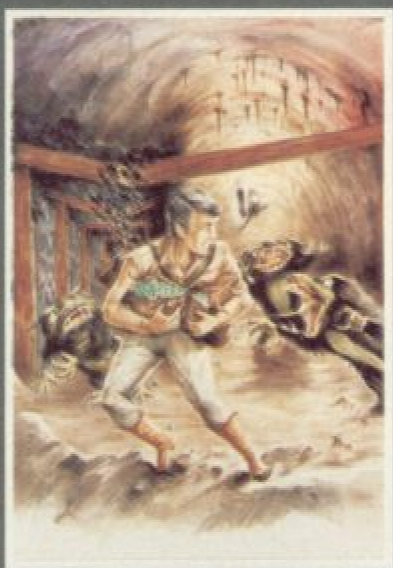
HIGHWAY HAWKS
Grand Prix driving skills is essential to negotiate the crowded highway at speed. Obliterate the assassins cars and the ones that get in your way but keep the tiger in your tank fed, the engine cool and the tyres and steering intact. Acquisition of faster cars and lethal weaponary depends on your driving and trading skills.
AMIGA £19.95 (2 DISCS)





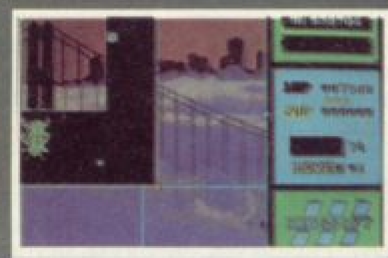
EMERALD MINE
A giant arcade adventure which has received rave reviews. Each level has its own unique solution and requires ingenuity and dexterity to complete. One player or two players TEAM action for added enjoyment.
AMIGA £14.95
CBM64-PLUS 4 £7.95 (D) £9.95







MANIAX
Maniax relentlessly pursued by the creature undertakes to clear the thick fog engulfing the world capitals. An addictive game requiring quick thinking and action.
AMIGA-ST-IBM £19.95
CBM64-PLUS 4 £7.95 (D) £9.95



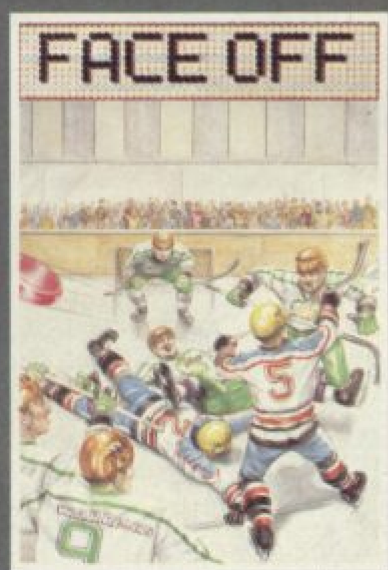


STRIP POKER II PLUS
A sizzling evening with Sam & Donna
AMIGA-ST-IBM-ARCH. £14.95
SP-AMS-MSX-BBC-ELECTRON
CBM64-PLUS 4 £7.95

QUANTOX
Progress through 24 levels of this fast and furious action. Lightning responses are secondary to the strategic choices between better weaponry or better defence.
AMIGA £14.95



FACE OFF
Experience the sheer pace and exhilaration of ICE HOCKEY. Be prepared for the body checks, fouls and rough play. League competition, 1 or 2 player option.
AMIGA-ST-IBM £14.95





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Requires Strip Poker II Plus disc to load
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Disc 2 Lee & Roy
Disc 3 Suzanne & Bianca
Disc 4 Rachel & Kim
AMIGA-ST £9.95



DAWN

MICRO TEXT / **MICRO BASE**
Ideal for home and business use. Menu driven to enable a novice to use powerful capabilities with minimal reference to the tutorial manual.
Micro base - a powerful data base with fast SEARCH and SORT facilities includes a very flexible label printer. Sorted files can be used by the Micro Text word Processor to send personalised letters. A boon to any Club Secretary.
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KOREA MINDED

SUMMER OLYMPIAD
Tynesoft

Tynesoft appropriately released *Winter Olympiad* back in February and now, on the eve of the Seoul Olympics, we get the summer sequel. The man behind the 16-bit game is **Paul Drummond** while **Michael Landruff** handled the visuals on the 8-bit versions.

As numerous forthcoming documentaries will doubtless remind you, the modern Olympic Games originated in 1896 due to the efforts of Baron Pierre De Coubertin. The first Games were held in Athens, where the Greeks held their sporting competitions in ancient times.

Tynesoft, quite sensibly, have limited their coverage of the Games to just five events: Skeet Shooting, Fencing, Triple Jump, High Diving and Hurdles. In each event, including fencing, players take turns rather than compete directly against each other.

Seoul man

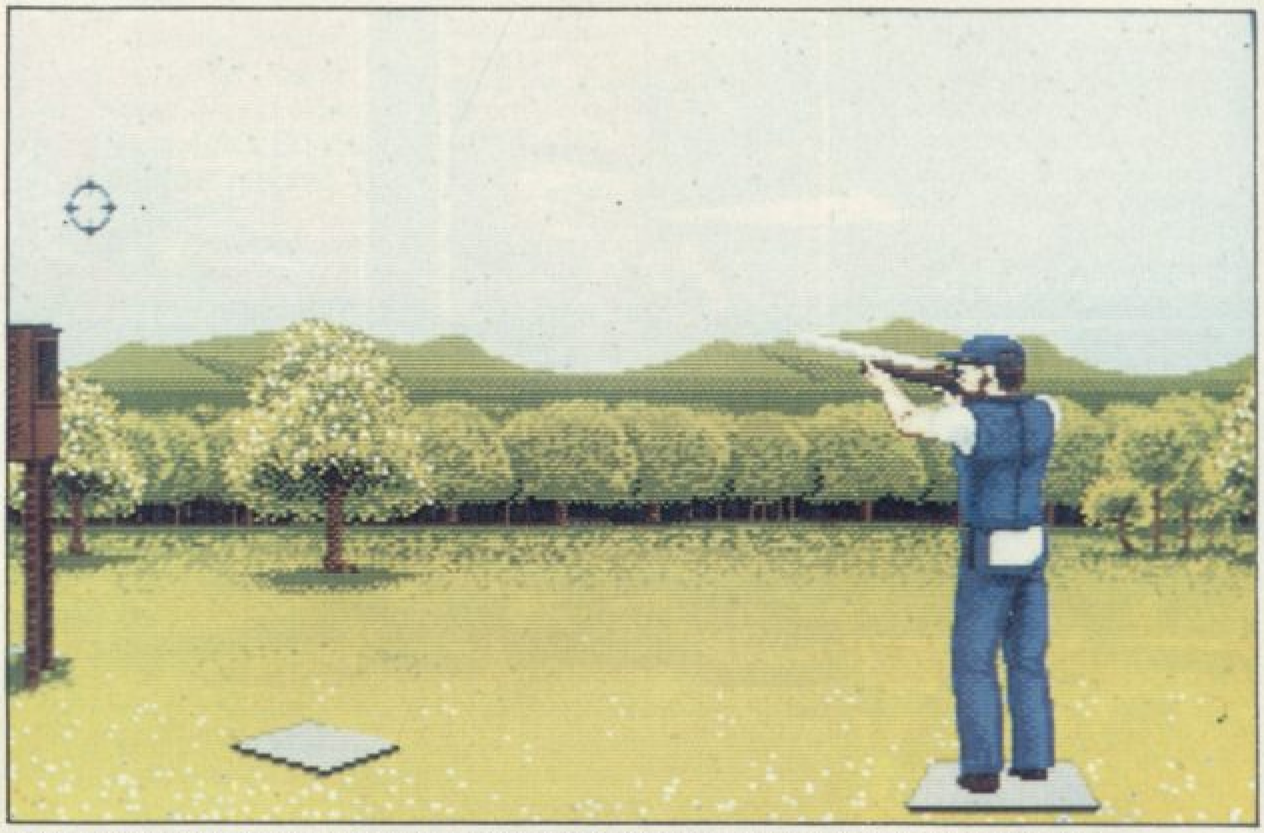
The Skeet Shooting appears to be quite authentic, featuring seven different shooting positions around two firing traps. During his turn a player progresses through the shooting traps, with the angle, speed, and height varying accordingly. Clays are released as soon as the player moves the joystick upwards and shots are strictly limited. The difficulty in this event comes from the need for swift and accurate reactions, rather than simply hitting lots of targets quickly as in *Hypersports*.

Fencing originated in Elizabethan duelling matches, but the Tynesoft game captures little of the sport's subtlety. Left or right on the joystick gives a riposte or parry respectively, pressing the fire button makes you lunge forward, and advance or retreat is controlled by moving the joystick forwards and backwards. The number of hits needed to win a round varies from machine to machine, but all versions have a time limit.

The Triple Jump is more playable with the player running down a track, using left or right rhythmically to build up speed until pressing fire and using up and down to set the correct angle for each leap.

Diving is one of the nicest looking and enjoyable sports, particularly on the Atari ST where a detailed breakdown is given over the allocation of marks. Moves are restricted to tucking/untucking, speed of rotation and piking.

Hurdles are not much more complicated, but keeping speed up with joystick waggling while correctly timing jumps is a tried-and-tested formula.



Going skeet crazy as you attempt to shoot the incredibly small, fast moving clay discs – Atari ST screen



Power, correct angles and a quick wrist action are the unusual requirements for making a good triple-jump – Atari St

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

This version uniquely features a side-on view of the hurdles. Everything is sufficient but nothing is outstanding, and the game doesn't compare that favourably with the soon-to-be-released Epyx offering, Gold Silver Bronze.

OVERALL 74%

PC
Diskette: £24.95

The PC game offers an 8-colour CGA mode for '100% compatible' Amstrads, but there's no EGA option. Nevertheless even in 4-colour mode the graphics are well-drawn with an acceptable intro tune. Unfortunately the gameplay is very weak with the Skeet Shoot being too fast, while the Hurdles demand jumps be timed even before they appear on screen.

OVERALL 63%



The very attractive opening ceremony features balloons, an air ship and the lighting of the famous torch – Commo dore 64/128 screen

ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.95

The loading of each event is accompanied by an excellent picture, and presentation throughout is first class. On the Hurdles section, for example, the 'camera' begins high up, then smoothly pans down behind the hurdlers. The whole game is playable, but makes no substantial improvement over 8-bit versions.

OVERALL 77%

OTHER VERSIONS

Conversions are imminent for the Spectrum, (cass: £9.95, disk: £14.95) and Amiga at £19.95.

"The gameplay is very weak"

VERSION UPDATE

VIXEN
Martech

PC: £24.99

REVIEWING *Vixen* on all three 8-bit machines together with the Atari ST in TGM**008** (Commodore 64/128 61%, Spectrum 48/128 60%, Amstrad CPC 42%, Atari ST 61%) would be enough to give anyone whiplash, but now a PC version has come along with some very impressive use of the EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adapter).

The gameplay remains the same, with Vixen, in Corinne Russell form, running to complete a level before time runs out, whipping evil denizens into shape and collecting fox heads along the way.

Once enough fox heads have been collected a bonus section comes into play at the next end-of-level stage. Vixen is transformed into a fox in a well-animated sequence, and here the aim is to collect a megawhip and as many jewels and megajewels as possible before time runs out.

Megajewels are used to multiply the score at the end of each level – but if a life is lost so are they. And on the higher levels the whip is vital as the monsters are much tougher to deal with.

Of all the versions so far, the PC game makes dramatically the best use of its machine. Even the impressive digitisation of Ms Russell pales – or should that be greys? – against the spectacularly colourful jungle and the creatures that inhabit it.

Apart from the absence of the ST's bright skies, the two versions are visually very close indeed. The PC even manages a relatively good attempt at a tune.

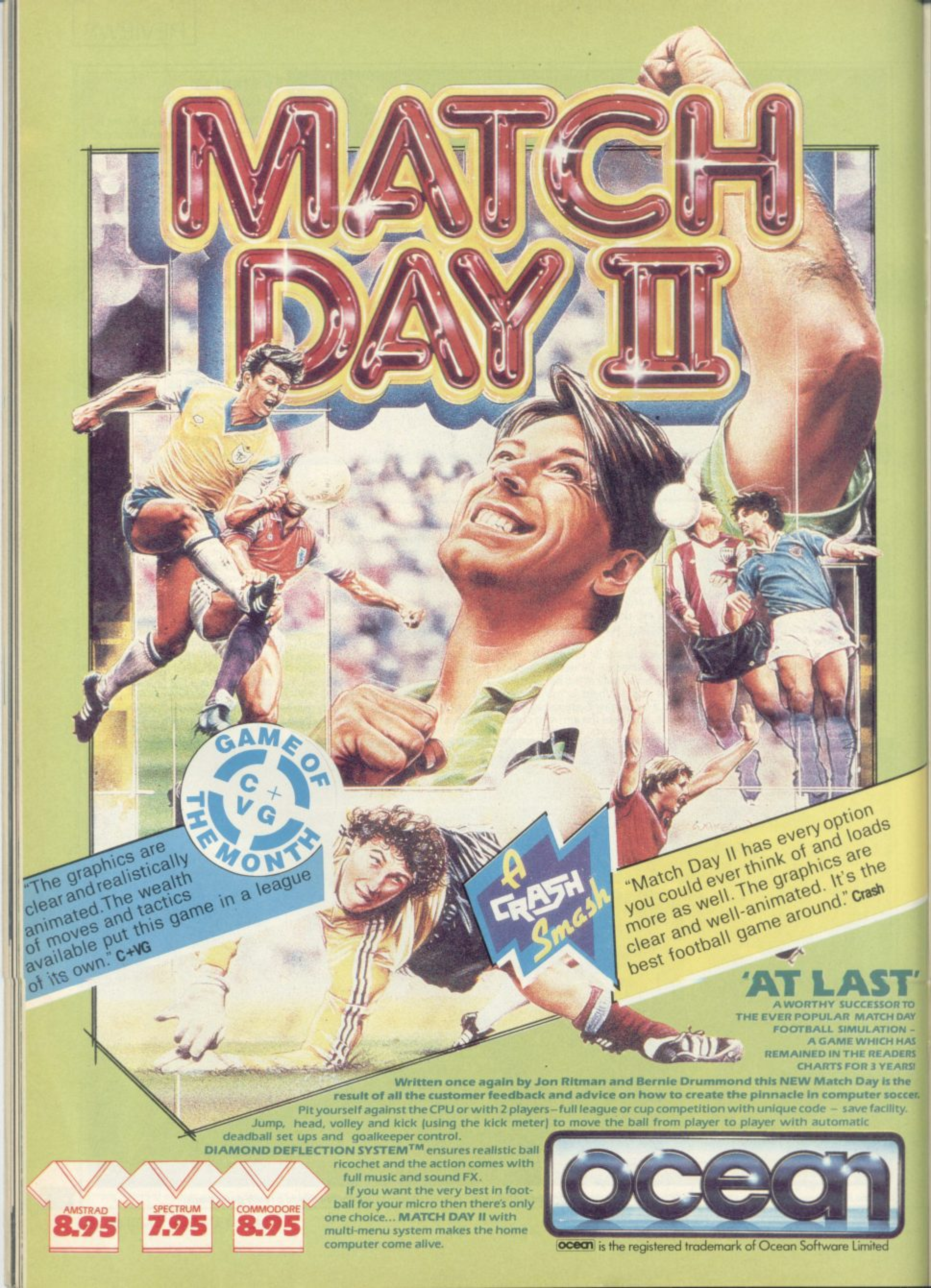
But playability remains rather weak – especially because if you don't possess an IBM-type joystick, the keyboard has to be used.

Still, overall this is an excellent example of what the PC can do when pushed. All praise to Martech for the obvious care taken on this commendable conversion.

PC: OVERALL 72%



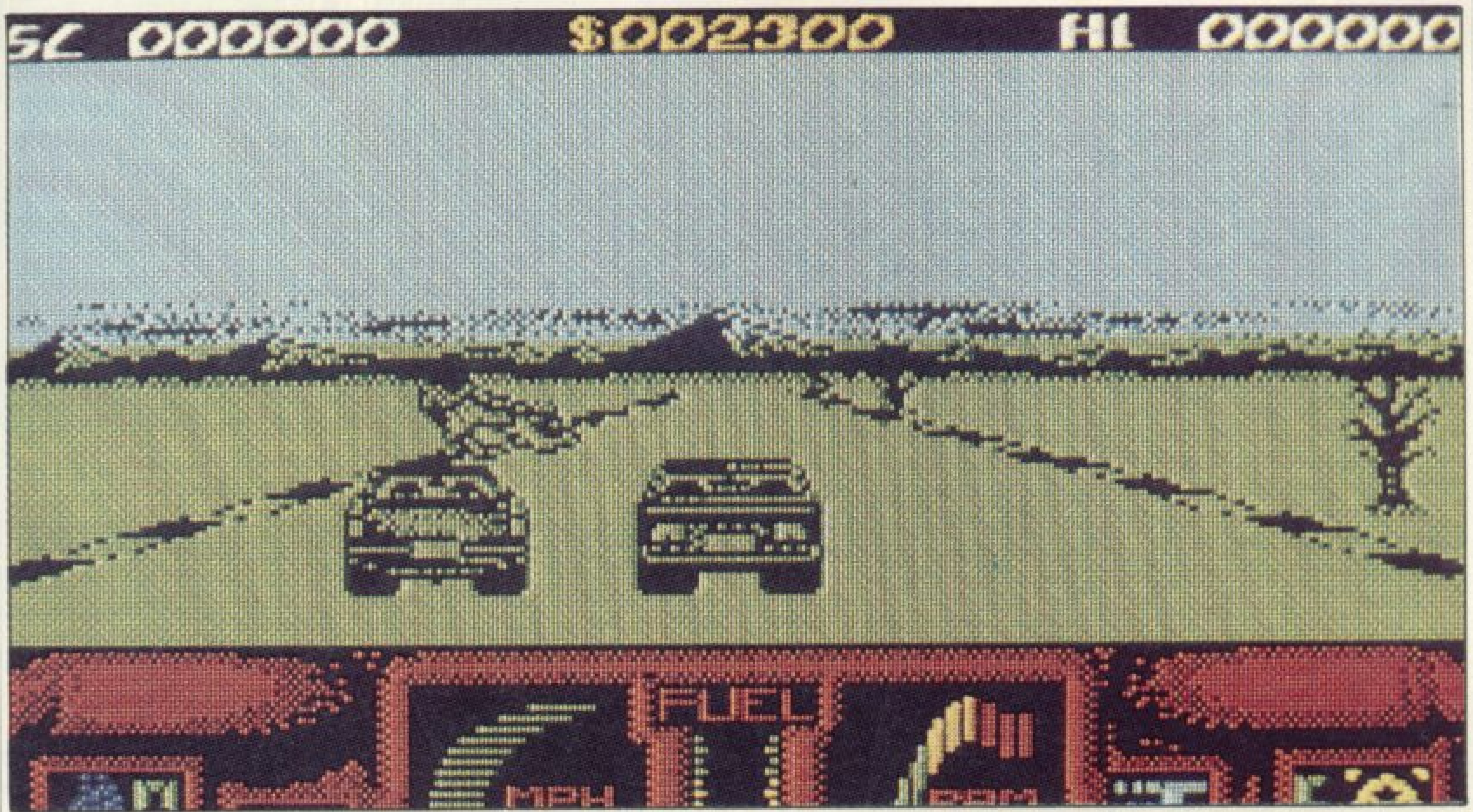
Corinne Russell never looked so good. The PC version of Vixen is a brilliant conversion, – now if someone will only do this to a really good game!


MATCH DAY II
GAME OF THE MONTH C+VG
"The graphics are clear and realistically animated. The wealth of moves and tactics available put this game in a league of its own." C+VG
A CRASH Smash
"Match Day II has every option you could ever think of and loads more as well. The graphics are clear and well-animated. It's the best football game around." Crash
'AT LAST'
A WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO THE EVER POPULAR MATCH DAY FOOTBALL SIMULATION – A GAME WHICH HAS REMAINED IN THE READERS CHARTS FOR 3 YEARS!
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AMSTRAD 8.95
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VERSION UPDATE

OVERLANDER
Elite

Spectrum 48/128: Cassette £7.99, Diskette: £12.99
Amstard CPC: Cassette £9.99, Diskette: 14.99



Slow but playable, Overlander purrs on to the Spectrum amid a screech of tyres

BREAK-NECK speeds, smooth scrolling, death and destruction – what more could any gamesplayer ask? **Haigh Hutchinson** programmed this most satisfying game, **Gary Tonge** did the visuals.

Overlander needs speed to work, something it achieves quite well on the Spectrum. The road-scrolling is smooth with hills and dips creating an effective impression of movement amid the constant action. Oncoming vehicles are detailed and look good despite being monochrome – a feature which tends to make trucks merge with the background, rendering their fire difficult to see.

On both 48K and 128K machines sonic presentation is impressive with highly effective in-game sound effects and an enjoyable 128 title-screen tune.

Unfortunately, the Amstrad *Overlander* looks to be a straight conversion of the Spectrum game, complete with monochrome graphics and restricted use of colours. Minimal effort has been put into the game's translation, making it most unsatisfying to look at and play.

Looking very much like the Spectrum game Overlander *on the Amstrad is a bit of a let-down.*



What the Z80 conversions do have is the playability of the original ST game (82% in TGM**010**). The challenge is tough to begin with but the extra weapons you can buy as you progress make the going easier. Gameplay is helped by the rapid response of the car, and the high degree of control you have over the vehicle. The extra equipment and weapons on offer provide a moderate amount of depth and variety. *Overlander* is well worth a look if you want aggressive automobile action.

SPECTRUM 48/128: OVERALL 74%
AMSTRAD CPC: OVERALL 63%

Whoops Apologies

In TGM**010** we stated that the Atari ST version of *Overlander* was written by **Richard Underhill** when in fact **Darren Pegg** was responsible. **Richard Underhill** actually converted the Commodore 64/128 game. We apologise for this blunder – the reviewer in question has been subjected to horrors unmentionable.

PRESS ANY KEY

LIKE A RIND-BLOWN SOW PLOY

PSYCHO PIGS UXB

US Gold

The swine starring in *Psycho Pigs UXB* make *Animal Farm*'s tyranical Napoleon look a total boar – these pigs are really out to bring home the bacon. The game is licensed from the **Jaleco** coin-op, *Pigs And Bombers* and renamed by US Gold staff following a memo sent round requesting an apt title. It was converted by **Software Creations** (*Bubble Bobble* and *Bionic Commando*). fame.

In an intergalactic pig-sty the toughest, meanest porkers are gathered together to once and for all sort out which of them is the Psycho Pig of the millenium. Hopefully it will be you or a friend – *Psycho Pigs* can be played solo or by two players simultaneously.

Dicing with pork

The arena is set on one screen and before play commences opposing pigs and bombs are positioned. Each bomb has a different fuse length (ranging from five to 20 seconds). Your objective is simple – pick up a UXB (UneXploded Bomb) and lob it at an opponent.

Bombs hitting pigs explode them, sending your targets to that great sty in the sky. However, should one miss, the timer continues to counts down to zero and then explodes, taking the life of any nearby pig. Killing off an adversary rewards you with an icon to give your pig additional power, speed, stun or a protective coat.

SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette: £8.99
Diskette: £14.99

Psycho Pigs UXB **looks good, it's a shame that play is marred by slow joystick/key response. The 128K version features a mad-cap theme tune and spot FX. Graphics are minimalist – incorporating monochromatic pigs and bombs plus some decoration outside the play area. Appealing at first,** Pyscho Pigs UXB **loses its humour after a few goes – but not its simplicity.**

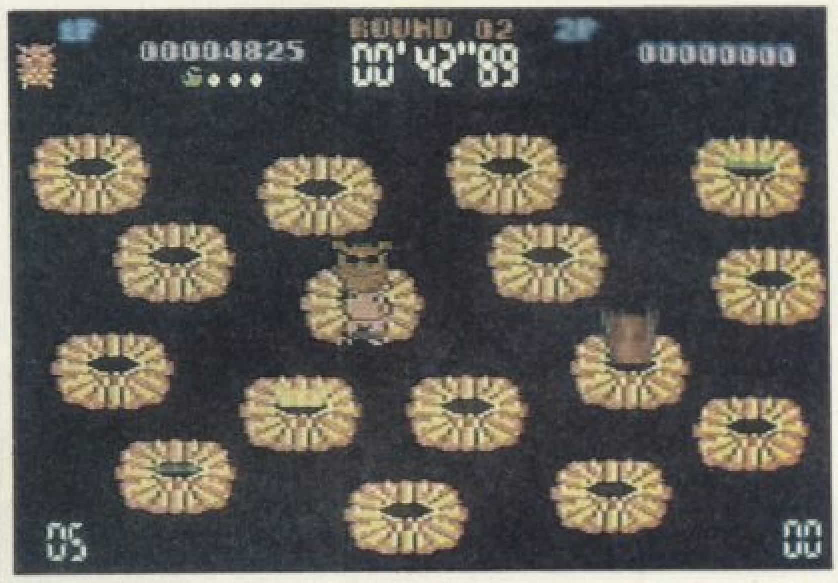
OVERALL 52%

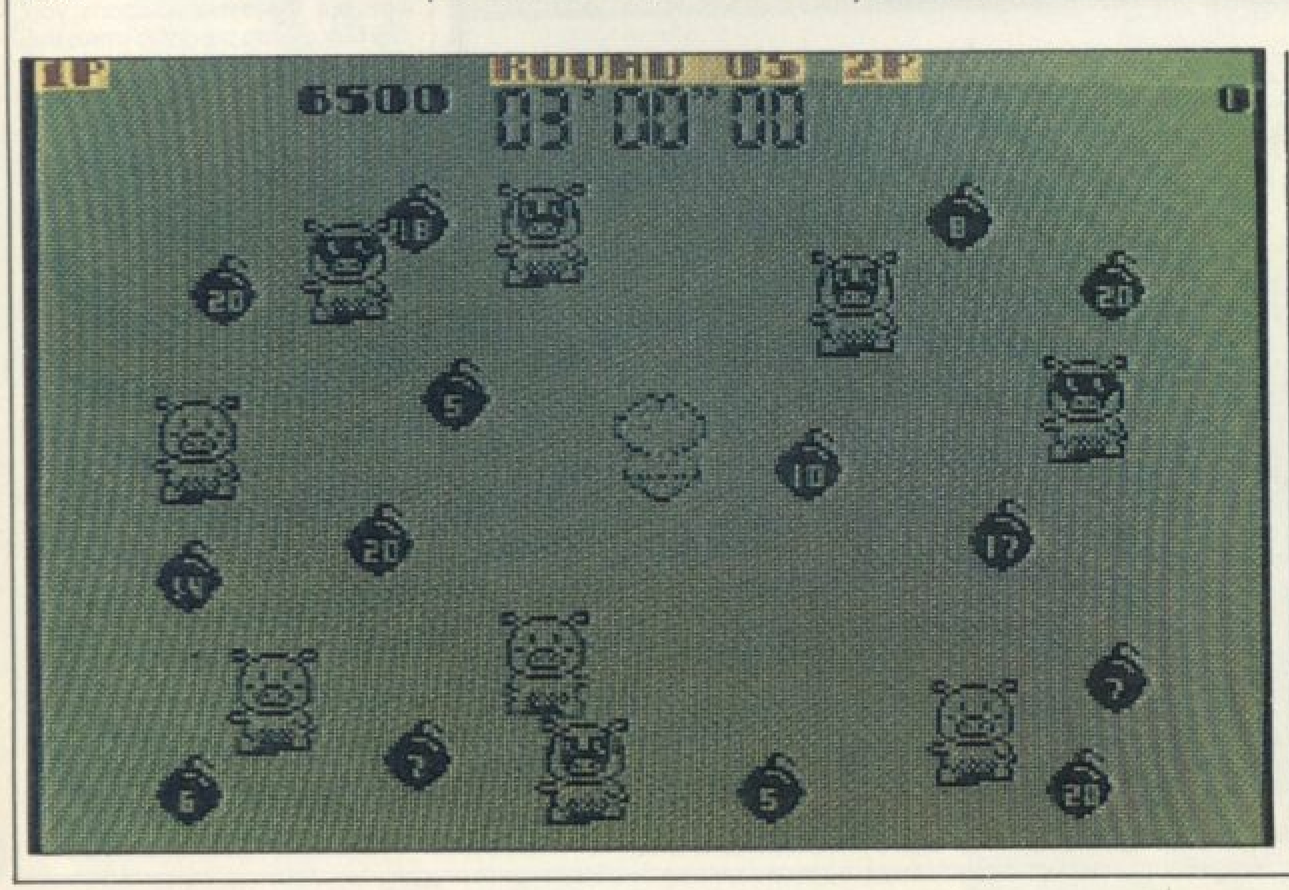
After every third screen, there's a bonus round. From 16 holes up pop sows and your pig must kiss as many as possible to rack up a score. You carry on kissing and killing until all your three lives are lost. A credit feature enables you to continue a game from the screen on which you died.

The action is incredibly silly, and for that reason quite captivating, making a welcome change from serious simulations and hard-core shoot-'em-ups.



Although not finished for the Commodore 64/128 at the time of going to press, we thought you might like to see what it looks like anyway





Bombing around and making a pig of yourself is all it takes to win in this game – Spectrum screen

OTHER FORMATS

To be released shortly on Commodore 64/128 and Amstrad CPC, both £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk.

"The action is incredibly silly, and for that reason quite captivating"

VERSION UPDATE

Rotorhead

GUNSHIP
MicroProse

Amtrad CPC: Diskette: £19.95

ORIGINALLY released on the Commodore 64/128 in April 1987, *Gunship* was highly acclaimed for its depth and the sophistication and fine detailing of the helicopters various display systems. Subsequent versions on the PC (TGM**004** 81%) and the Atari ST (TGM**005** 85%) were greeted equally warmly, and now the Amstrad CPC version is finally upon us.

You are placed in the cockpit of a US army AH-64 Apache helicopter, one of the most advanced battle helicopters in the world. The Apache has a maximum airspeed of 184 mph, and can be armed with Folding Fin Aerial Rockets (FFAR), Hellfire and Sidewinder missiles, and an automatic Chain Gun.

The controls at first look daunting as you climb aboard, but the manual is extremely comprehensive and is essential reading before take-off.

Altimeter, airspeed indicator, artificial horizon and rotor-speed meter are just a few of the dials which surround the main view.

The Apache has a special information system known as IHADSS – Integrated Helmet And Display Sighting System – which controls various optical systems and relays them to an eyepiece built into the pilot's helmet. This is of most use for TADS – Target Acquistion and Designation System – which tracks potential targets and relays information.

You engage in a choice of five East/West conflict areas, from Flight Training in the USA, where the enemies use blank ammunition, to 3rd Armoured Division in Western Europe, facing massed opposition. The realism of flight can be altered, with flying style simplfied, weather conditions and enemy equipment changed to suit.

Using the 8-bit processor, the graphics of the Amstrad CPC version are limited compared to the Atari ST and the overall presentation is more akin to the Commodore 64/128 game.

The update speed of the vector-drawn landscape and vehicles is fairly slow, but this does not affect enjoyment when battle commences. Sound is restricted to a basic rotor-blade effect, simple explosions and the occasional bleep.

A wealth of information is available, as ever, from the detailed MicroProse manual, and gameplay is easily as good as the Commodore 64/128 version. All in all, an absorbing and challenging helicopter combat simulation.

AMSTRAD CPC: OVERALL 81%



Our young blade joins the Rotary club and takes off in his Apache chopper

VERSION UPDATE

ROADBLASTERS
US GOLD

Spectrum 48/128: £8.99 Cassette, £12.99 Diskette

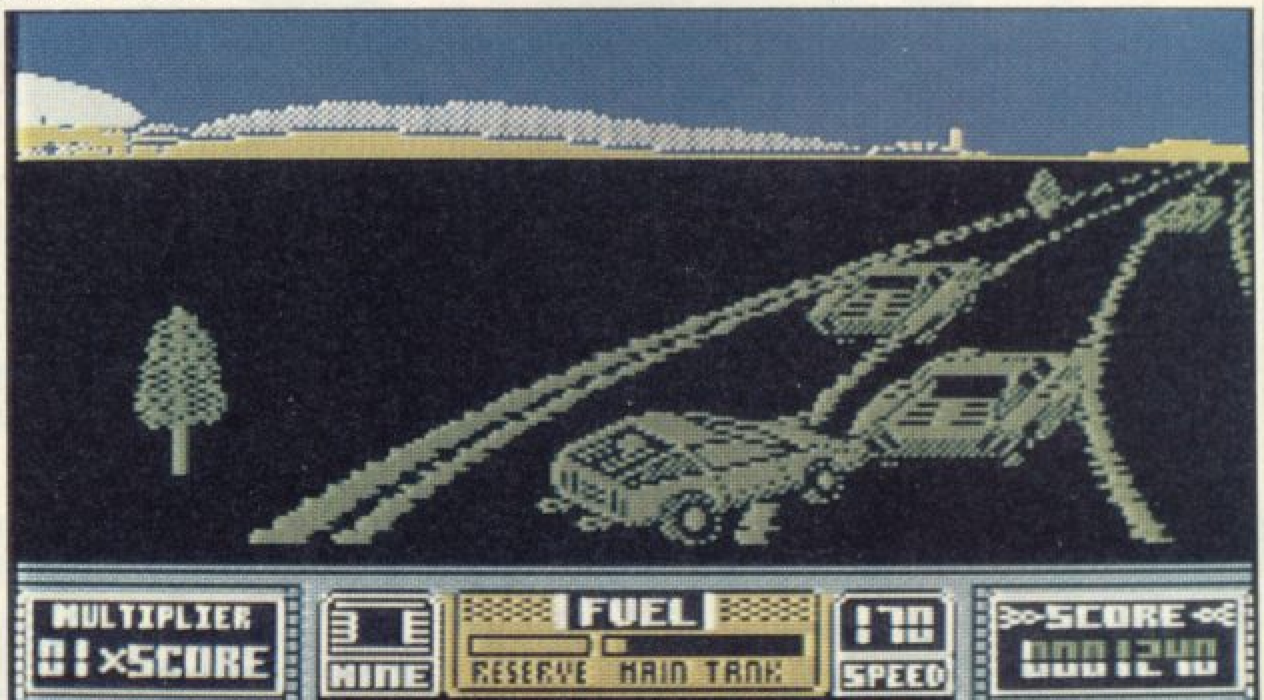
DJL SOFTWARE are responsible for the Spectrum conversion of this Atari road-racing destruction coin-op, following the disappointing Commodore 64/128 game (TGM**010**, 47%). Previously DJL have written *Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix* which received 73% in TGM**004** on the Spectrum 48/128 and 74% on the Amstrad CPC (TGM**005**)

This version of *Roadblasters* is the most playable, primarily due to the vehicle's manoeuvrability. Your car moves along the road with ease and responds quickly to joystick movements – although over-sensitivity is a minor problem. The scrolling techniques are slightly jerky and the slowness of the car doesn't help the situation. The track layouts are short and not too demanding, with the progressive difficulty pitched at just the right level. The backdrop of hills and cities are attractive but suffer from overall lack of colour.

The sonics are well above average consisting of the purring of the engine, bullet fire and a short but sweet tune at the end of a level.

For all of its bad points, most of which are down to the graphics, the Spectrum 48/128 version of *Roadblasters* does have playability. It is this all-important factor which sets it above the Commodore 64/128 game.

SPECTRUM 48/128: OVERALL 62%

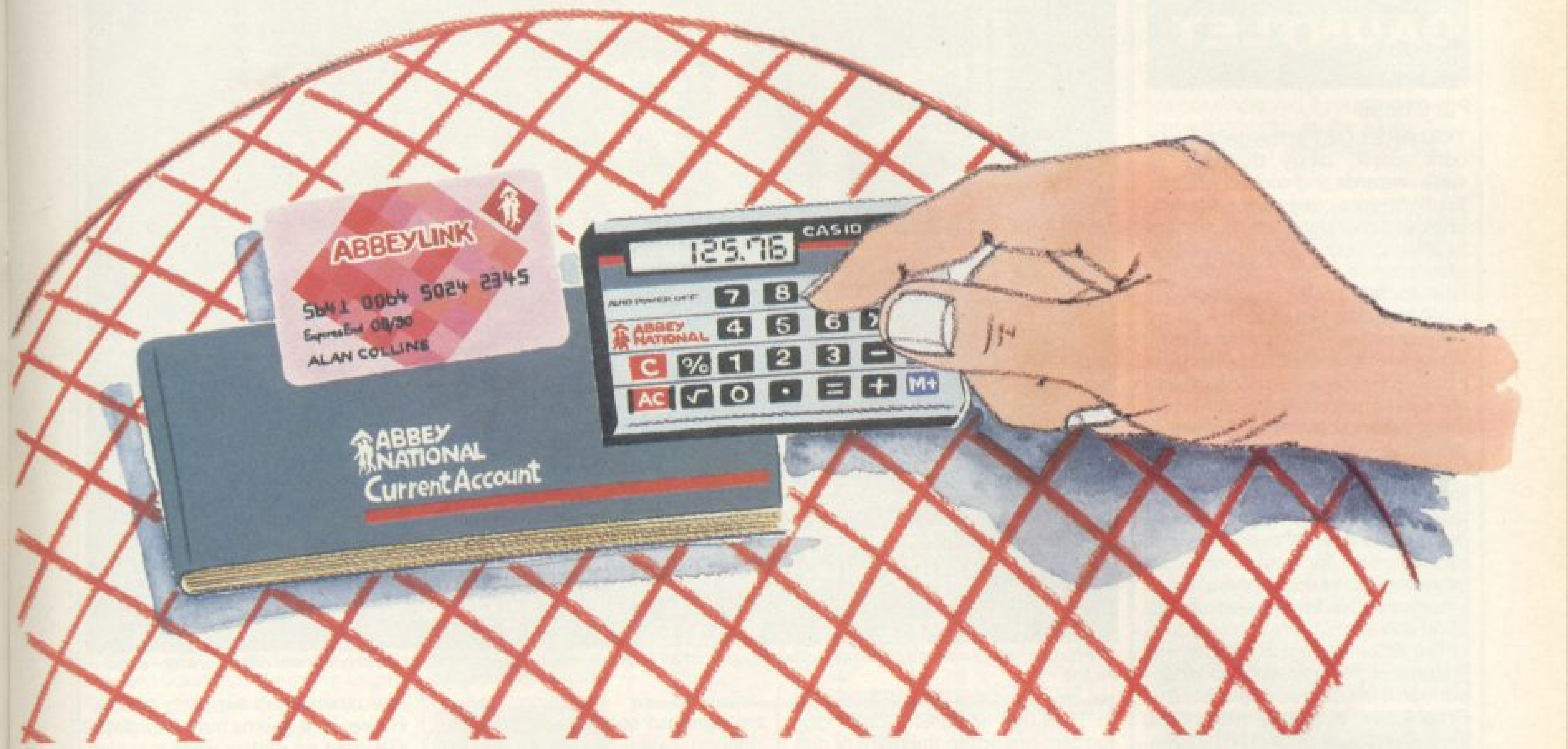


Monochromatic it may be, but most of the fun of the arcade game has been kept – it's blast, damn and blast all the way!

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VERSION UPDATE

GAUNTLET
US Gold

PC: £19.99

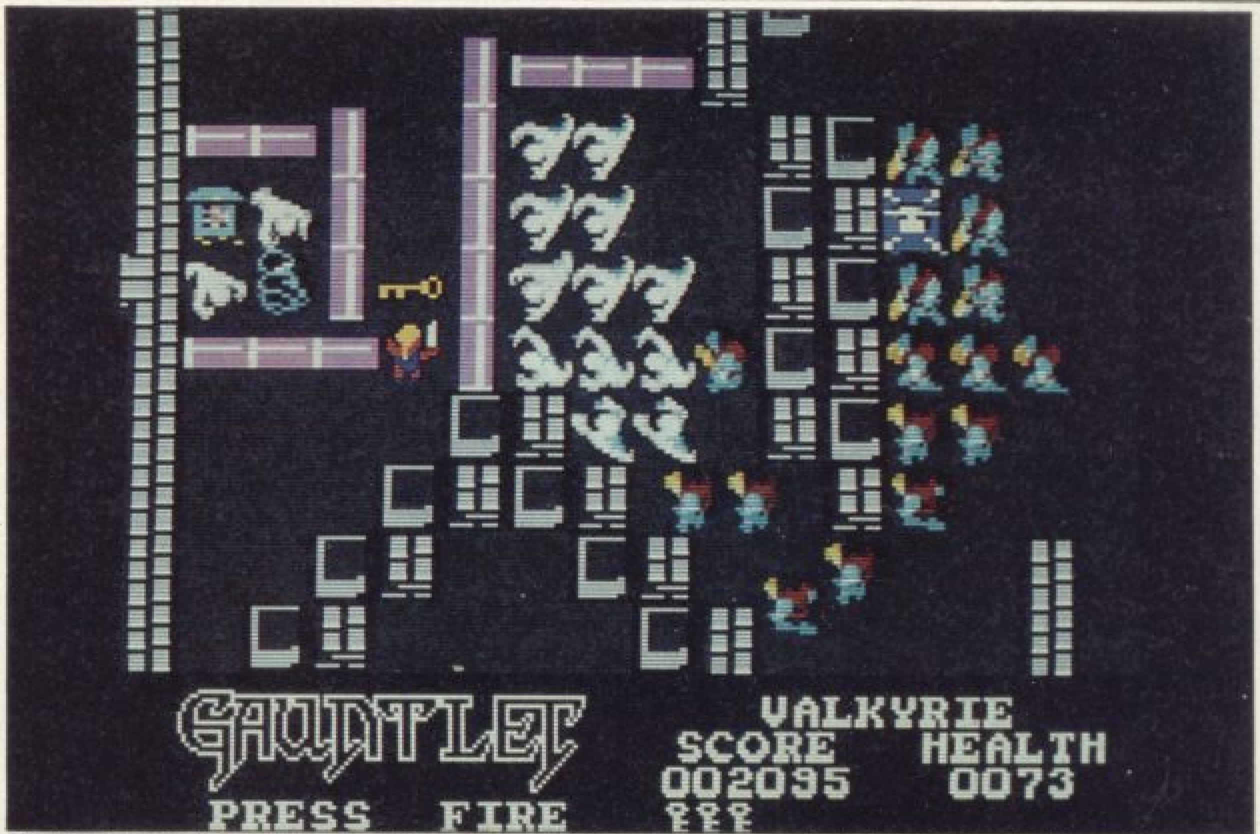
YOU ARE LOST in the depths of a dark, dank, dingy dungeon of walls, wizards and wicked wraiths. To fight your way to freedom a choice of four dynamic characters is offered from which to select a champion – Thor the Warrior, Questor the Elf, Thyra the Valkyrie and Merlin the Wizard.

Viewed from above, your bid for sanctuary is marred by the denizens of the deep. Disposal of the malevolent monsters is achieved using either standard or magic weapons picked up along the way.

Portals (when located) are used to access higher levels. Although defeating hordes of evil creatures really takes it out of even the most heroic hunks, food and drink can be picked up to sustain you. Keys are also yours to find and use to open barriers.

The PC incarnation retains the features of the coin-op and incorporates a fair degree of playability. Graphically, it closely resembles the Commodore 64/128 game with sprites adequately representing the dungeon characters (and we reviewed the Atari ST version in TGM **008** at 93%). Scrolling is juddery but not to the point of distraction.

Gauntlet could have been improved by including varied background colours and properly defined walls – the mazes are dull in comparison to the lively sprites. PC sound, as always, consists of a few bleeps and warbling effects. However, it seems that *Gauntlet* is *Gauntlet* no matter what machine it appears on.



The hero doesn't stand a ghost of a chance against all these spooks – never mind, at least his death will be pretty – even on the PC!

PC: OVERALL 72%

VERSION UPDATE

Carry on cruising

CARRIER COMMAND
Rainbird

Amiga £24.95

RAINBIRD'S FLAGSHIP for 1988 exploded on the ST in TGM **007** at 98%, hailed as 'a classic, a seminal game destined to change the state of software and almost certainly Game of the Year'. High praise indeed. Written by **Realtime Software**, *Carrier Command* now enters Amiga waters.

An arcade/strategy/simulation, you command the aircraft carrier, Epsilon in a battle against the computer-controlled carrier, Omega – the prize being domination of a network of 64 energy-producing islands.

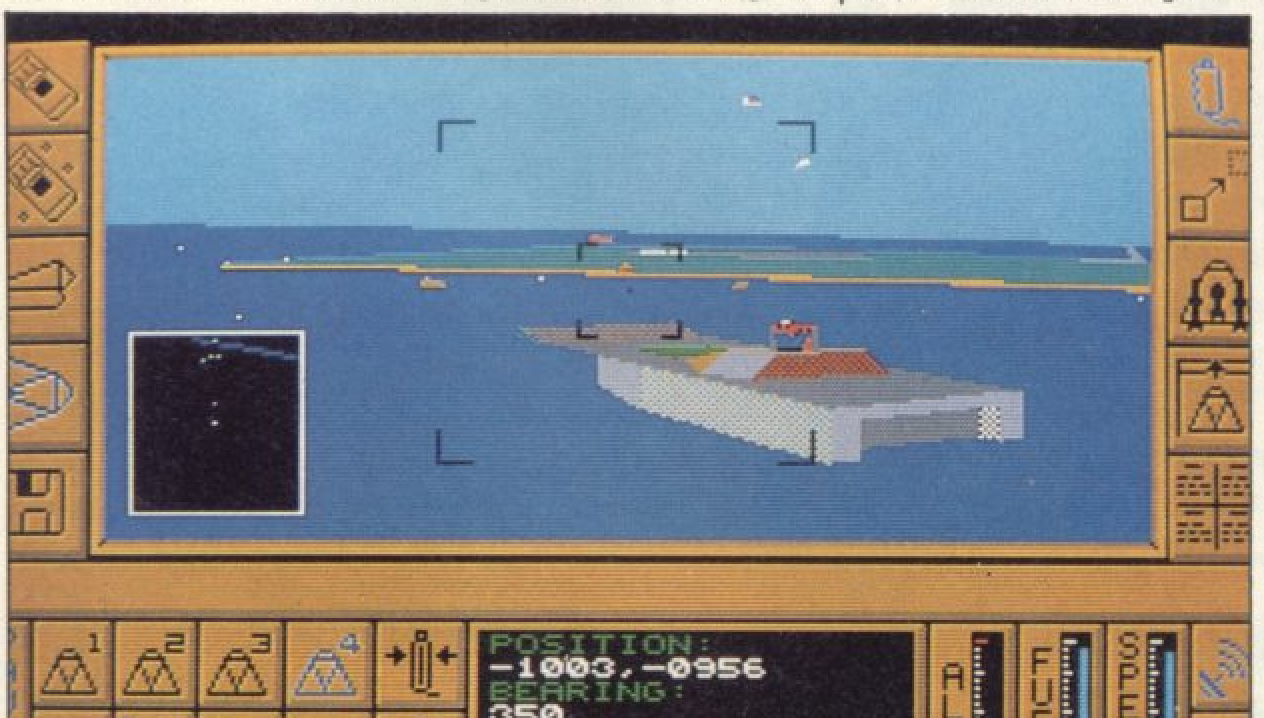
Manta aircraft and Walrus amphibious tanks are on stand-by to provide air-attack and ground-strike capability. And there are laser cannon and carrier defences – an awesome fighting force.

Strategy plays a major part in the game as unique island networks can be created to suit your plans. Islands within the network can be defined to perform different tasks such as mining for resources, building supplies with the resources or defend key areas.

Problems crop up continuously to keep you busy – the carrier may get damaged, supplies of weapons, fuel and equipment can run low and key islands in the network can be lost to Omega's forces. The latter problem is your main concern. With each conquered island, Omega increases in power, expands its network and further tightens its grip on the island network.

The solid 3-D graphics are primarily the preserve of 16-bit machines. Animation is fast, very smooth and equal to its ST counterpart. Sound has been improved with many effects beefed up, together with additions such as the hum of the carrier's engines and a brief *Sentinel*-style tune on the title screen. The speed of the carrier has also been upgraded (as on later ST versions).

The strategy/arcade action works very well, providing the same long-term challenge that kept ST owners burning the midnight oil. A minor quirk is that the game does not take advantage of the Amiga's extra colours. But Amiga *Carrier Command* offers as much depth and entertainment as on the Atari ST.



Piloting a Manta attack aircraft, radar on, you swoop low over the occupied island of Thermopylae

AMIGA: OVERALL 97%

IF I ONLY HAD A BRAIN

BRAINBOX
CRL

After the megahype of *Dracula*, *Jack The Ripper* and *Wolfman* it's a surprise to find a **CRL** game that doesn't require all sorts of ID to buy. In fact simple, but effective presentation is true of the game as much as the packaging for this interesting game by first time programmer **PJ Peatie**.

Brainbox sets computer against player in a quiz-based version of noughts-and-crosses with a strict time limit. If you answer a question correctly you get a green cross and the right to choose the next square to be contested. Should you get it wrong, a red nought appears and the computer picks the next square, attempting to get its own line, thus winning the game.

Tie-breaker

All questions in a round should be correctly answered inside ten seconds – in total. Once a question has been asked you need to answer as quickly as possible – by pressing the relevant key – so as to preserve time for later questions. Points are awarded for each correct answer and if you beat the computer, a time-related bonus is awarded before the next round. If neither contestant wins, a tie-breaker question is asked.

Brainbox claims to include over 3,000 questions and CRL plan to release a second data disk, although price and release date have yet to be set. The existing questions are among the toughest we've encountered in this type of game, and winning a single game was quite an achievement.

Question categories are Books, Science, Sport, Leisure, Places, History, Pot Luck and Art, with points varying for correct answers. In one, prolonged playing session none of the questions came up again, while on rebooting only about two or three questions were repeats. Irritatingly the answers are not displayed if you get a question wrong, but at the same time this obviously prolongs the life of the game.



The questions are difficult enough without the added pressure of a time limit

ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.95

The screen graphics are simple but effective. Sonically the game features some nice samples of speach, unfortunately the presentation of each question is accompanied by a teeth-grating teletype effect – the volume control comes in handy at this point. Another drawback is the lack of competitive two-player games. Nevertheless for solo or team play this is a very original and enjoyable presentation of a trivia-type game.

OVERALL 64%

OTHER FORMATS
No plans as yet

"Original and enjoyable presentation of a trivia-type game"

Where's the arm in it?

VERSION UPDATE

BIONIC COMMANDO
GO!

Amiga: £24.99

PRETTY MUCH a whopper so far, it has received 86% (Commodore 64/128 TGM **007**), 86% for Spectrum (TGM **009**) **and 91% for Atari ST.**

Like the other versions, the Amiga game is set across five, multiload levels in which the spikey-haired hero races against time to reach the final silo level to abort the launch of a doomsday missile.

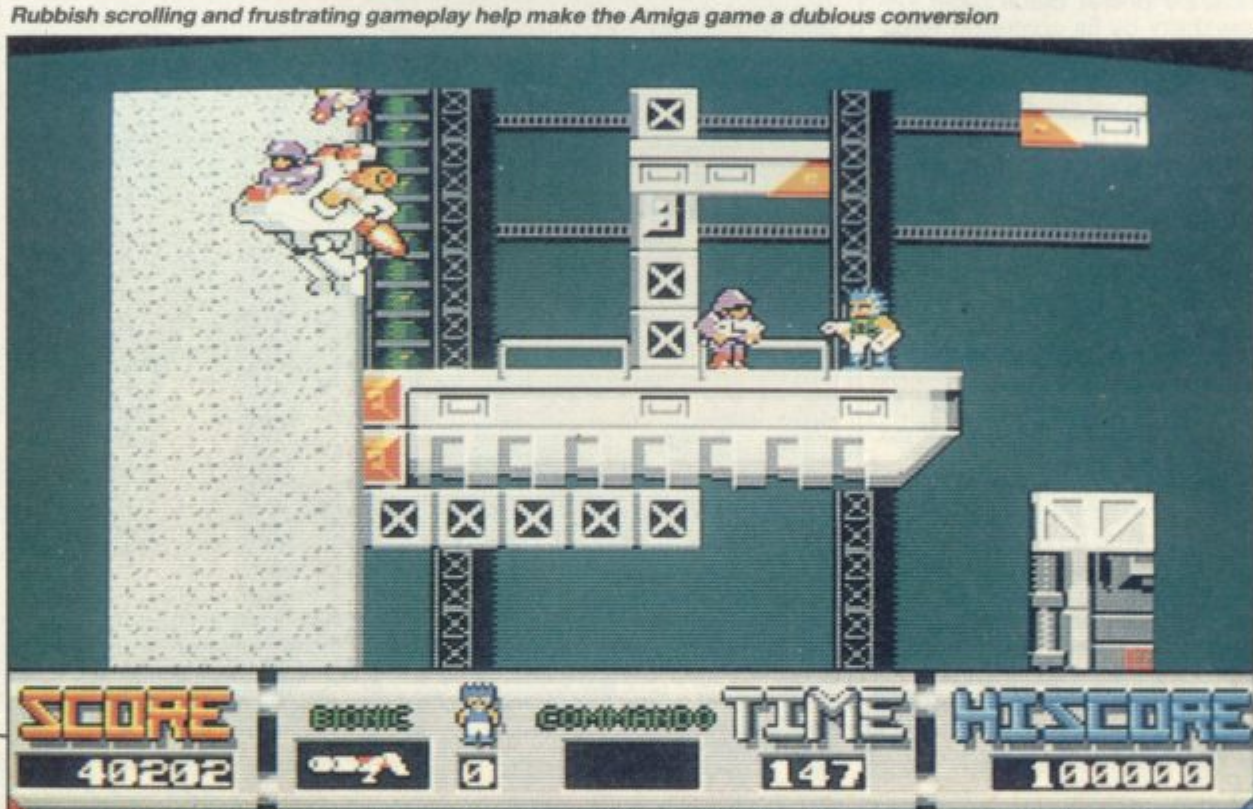
Each level consists of many platforms, with the commando's bionic telescopic arm serving as a ladder. While swinging between platforms, he keeps an eye out for platoons of soldiers, killer bees, kamikaze soldiers, walkers and helicopters.

A simple rapid-fire gun is provided, but more powerful weapons may be obtained along the way.

The Amiga version is yet another straight conversion of an ST game, with the jerky scrolling perfectly preserved. Nevertheless, apart from the scrolling, it's a close conversion of the arcade game with some unusual and compelling gameplay.

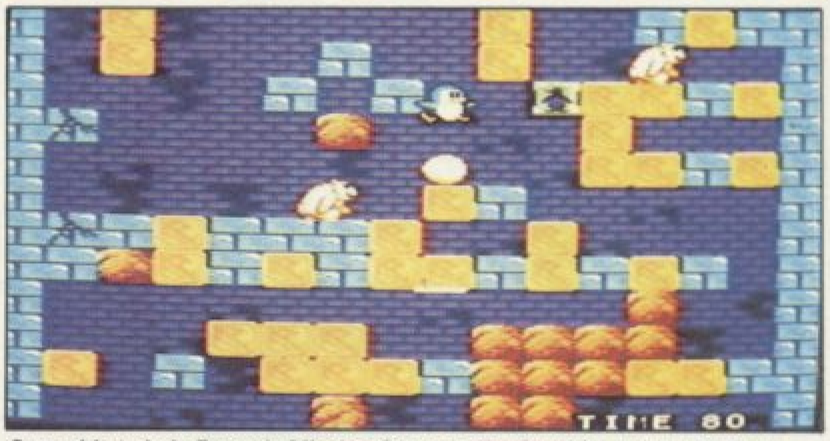
AMIGA: OVERALL 81%

Rubbish scrolling and frustrating gameplay help make the Amiga game a dubious conversion



PENGUINS IN PARADISE AIN'T KIDDING

Sega games so far have often relied on conversions of big arcade con-ops, such as Out Run **and** Afterburner**. These four latest releases reviewed on these pages are original game designs, although they are based on tried and tested formulae. All are Mega Cartridges, priced £19.95**



Scramble to help Penguin Mission Commander Overbite rescue his three eggs

PENGUIN LAND

A game and character reminiscent of the MSX *Penguin Adventure*, *Penguin Land* features strong puzzle elements.

Penguin Mission Commander Overbite has a delicate yet urgent task. Three precious penguin eggs are stranded on a distant planet, stolen by an anti-amphibious force. Overbite has discovered the eggs, but 50 sectors lie between his precious cargo and home. He must push them past ferocious animals and unstable rocks without splitting the fragile shells.

There's a time limit on each round, which takes place in a vertically scrolling series of platforms. Four screens in depth, the blocks making up these platforms impede progress. Most blocks are destructible if pecked at, but golden blocks are impervious to Overbite's beak.

Some blocks act like golden ones but constantly shrink and grow, while others are cracked and crumble to dust if an egg is dropped on them or they are walked on. Special green blocks have holes allowing an egg or Overbite to pass through, depending on which silhouette the hole forms.

Aggressive polar bears must be put out of action with overhead boulders, disturbed by a swift peck and manoeuvred by the hero, if he's not to be stunned by a gruff paw. Malicious buzzards fly overhead if an egg is left alone too long, dropping bricks on them – messy.

The first 30 rounds are selectable when you begin a game but the remaining levels can only be played when these have all been completed. In addition to the set game screens, 15 more can be designed with a screen editor, and stored within the cartridge. Blocks (and bears) are selected from a menu at the bottom of the screen and positioned on a map with a cursor. Levels can then be saved and played as a normal round.

The mixture of ideas in *Penguin Land* make a pleasant contrast to arcade adventures and shoot-'em-ups. Removing blocks and pushing objects around is reminscent a *Boulderdash*/ *Lode Runner* combination, but in a vertical format. The puzzles are often infuriating and require dextrous use of the Sega keypad, which makes the game difficult, but one worth mastering. And finally, the screen editor adds variety already numerous rounds, giving long lasting interest to what appears at first to be a game reliant only on a cute idea.

OVERALL: 79%

MAZE HUNTER 3-D

The expensive Sega 3-D glasses have spawned few games to take advantage of the 'revolutionary' peripheral. *Blade Eagle*, lost playability by its confusing visual depth. *Space Harrier 3-D* has yet to arrive, but in the meantime *Maze Hunter* is an addition for 3-D spec wearers.

You are the Maze Hunter, a warrior obsessed by conquering mazes. Now you face the ultimate challenge – The Labyrinth.

The game's a blatant copy of the classic Atari coin-op, *Gauntlet*, a format previously lacking on the Sega. But it's restricted to single-player action, which immediately loses game potential, although to a limited degree the 3-D effect makes up for it.

You begin unarmed on Sublevel 1 (three to each of the four levels which make up an Area), in a four-way scrolling maze, shown in plan view. Aliens approach as you explore, and can be dodged by jumping, or killed with an easily found Ninja-style fighting cane.

Contact with aliens, or stepping into the void from a low maze level, results in the loss of a life and returns you to the level's start.

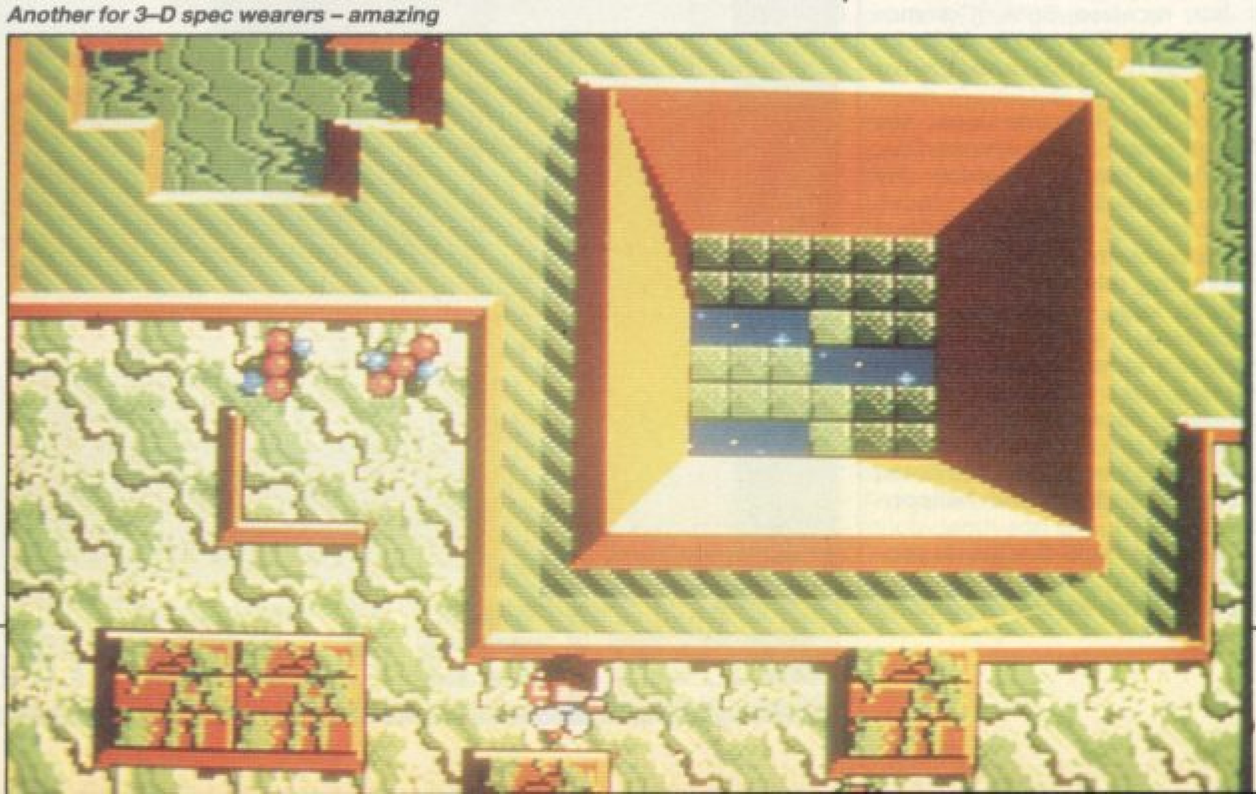
Sublevels are played in groups of three, descending into the screen by using warp tunnels. A gate key is required for access to the next level or area. Keys are found lying in the maze corridors, contained in question-mark boxes, as are other useful objects such as more powerful weapons and increased speed.

You and the aliens are always on the same level, so the depth matching problems of *Blade Eagle* aren't present. As the Sega glasses also allow full-colour within the effect, some atmosphere is gained by the 3-D without it being a distraction.

Sound is simple, not living up to the visuals in any way, but the real problem is the generally dull gameplay. *Gauntlet*'s main excitement is the horde of monsters gradually sapping your energy. A few aliens which can instantly kill you are poor adversaries in comparison.

OVERALL 62%

Another for 3–D spec wearers – amazing



AZTEC ADVENTURE

Arcade adventures, with the emphasis on maze exploration, are not an obvious choice of format for a console, the *Pac-Man* style of *Fantasy Zone* being the only attempt on the Sega. The multicharacter control of *Aztec Adventure* sets out to put the deficit to rights.

Initial expectations are high. Attractive title and game introductory screens lead into the game itself. All dashed, though, by the appearance of a crude maze style not helped by the gameplay.

The Aztec Paradise of legend lies somewhere in the depths of the South American jungles. To date, monsters and spirits of the surrounding labyrinth have claimed all those who have tried to find it. But you, Nino, are the bravest and most intelligent explorer of them all, and are more than willing to take on the challenge.

You begin in a forest, the first of 11 rounds. Areas of vegetation make up maze walls. Most of the the varied inhabitants are hostile, but three will help if you pay them. Papi the duck, Pupe the cat and Poh the dog can all be hired, and follow, mimicking your movements. Their greatest use is as defendants, swinging their swords as you wield your mighty blade.

Objects and weapons are gained when different enemies are killed. The faithful animals are paid

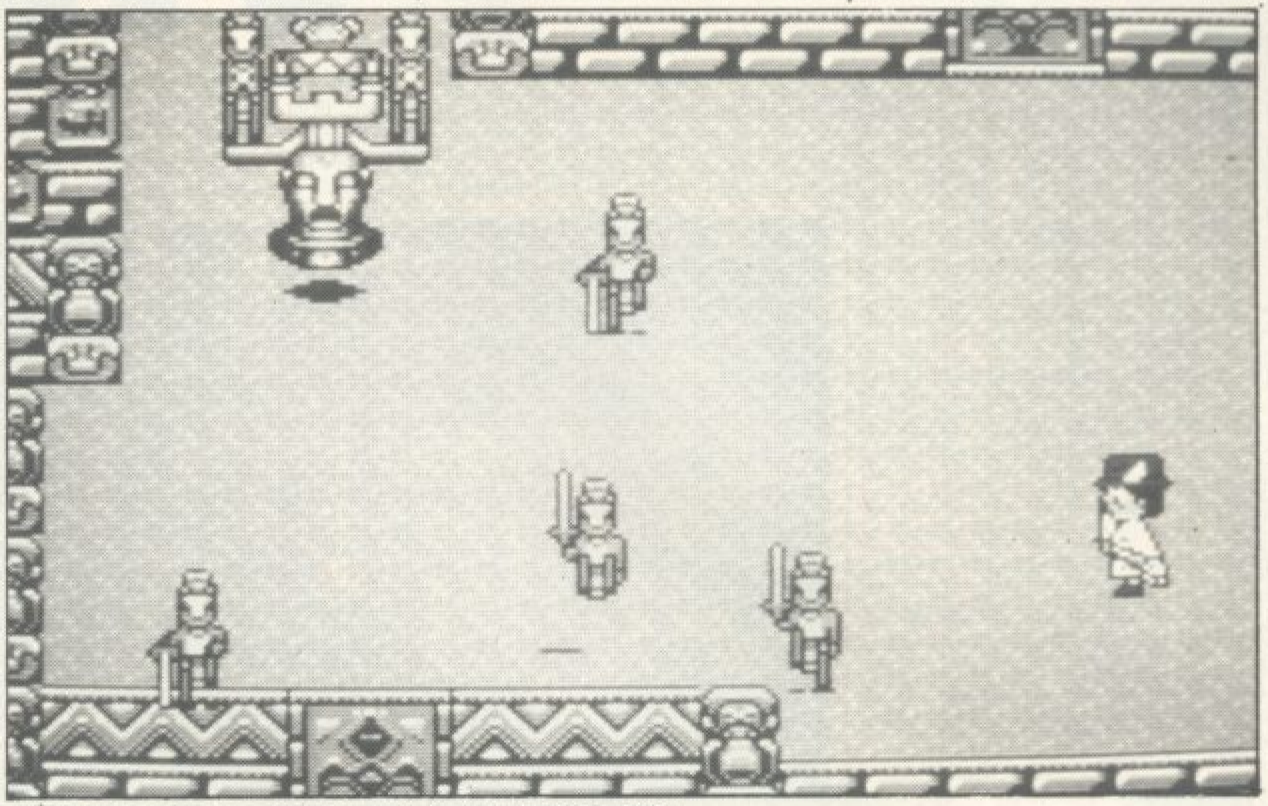
Dodging or despatching enemies is needed as energy is

for by money bags left behind when you kill a stalk-eyed frog.

lost on contact. Each round has a specific enemy, dependent on the scenery surrounding you, and a set number of these have to be destroyed with a particular weapon in order to progress to the next.

Control is awkward with a Sega keypad, movement cramped with the graphic size, and the intermittent scrolling is distracting. Add to that encounters with enemies of varying definition but constant two-frame animation and you have an Aztec Paradise best left unfound.

OVERALL 41%



Jungle warfare rages as you journey to find the Aztec Paradise

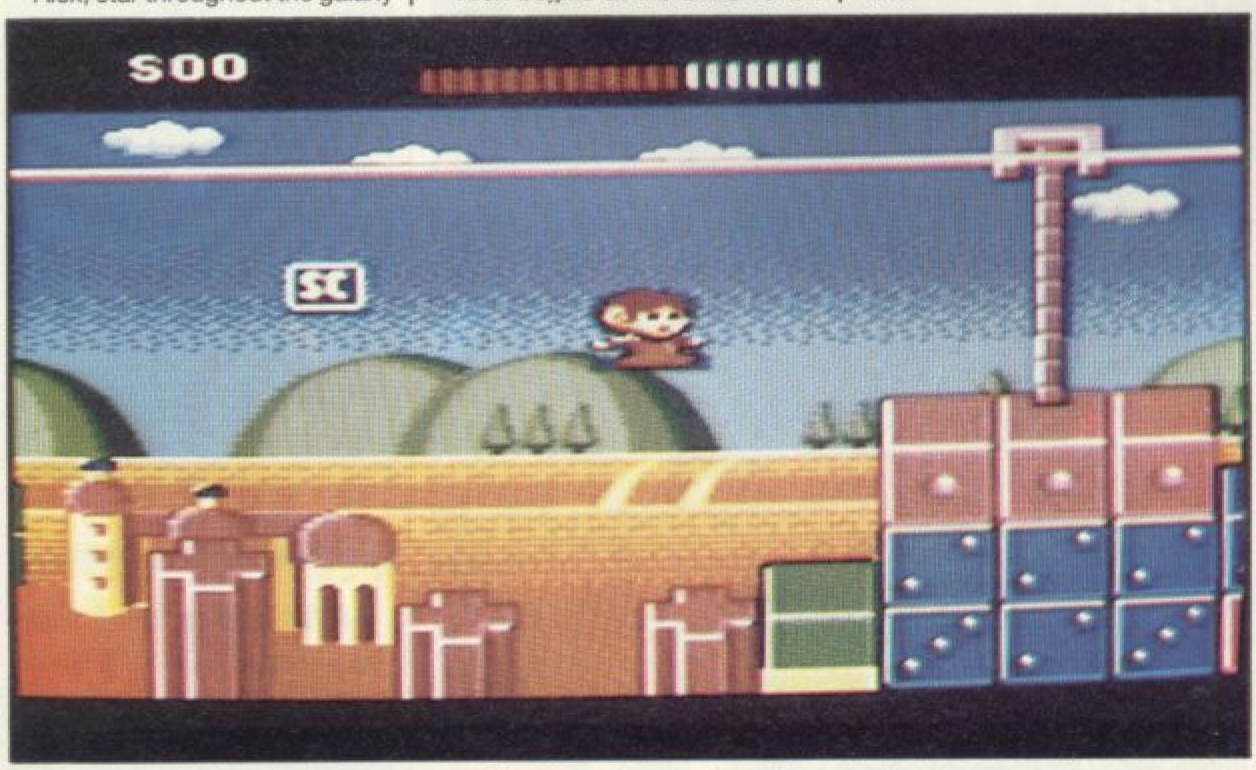
ALEX KIDD – THE LOST STAR

Simple, yet addictive, *Super Mario Brothers* probably gained the Nintendo console numerous sales. In *Alex Kidd* Sega now have a game in a similar – though graphically more varied – vein, introducing Alex Kidd – a character who may become the star of further games.

Alex, star throughout the galaxy of stage, screen and record, has became separated from his spacecraft, and is now lost countless miles from home. Many alien landscapes lie ahead of him, from forests and futuristic complexes to bright surrealistic scenes, all populated by deceptively friendly-looking creatures.

Alex begins at the extreme left of the first level, proceeding along the rightward scrolling landscape which must be completed within a time limit.

Dogs, walking cards, birds, clowns, cars and zombies are just a selection of the creatures harassing Alex through the game. They take two time units away on contact.



Cute-kid Alex bounces his way to success amid garish colours and puzzling gameplay

Special platform segments act like trampolines, giving Alex a long jump range, and others move around to enable him to cross otherwise impassable gaps. Other means of transport are available. A monorail line in Level One, for example, can be climbed along to bypass ground hazards, but progress made by such means is slow.

Icons float by during the game, giving various bonuses if collected. Extra points, additional time units and the ability to shoot can be gained, the latter being especially useful against the large enemies which guard the end of each level.

Don't be put off by cuteness taken to annoying extremes (Alex is a typical Japanese monkey-like creature), because a playable game is revealed. Diverse graphical variations and original features distinguish it from the *Super Mario Bros* coin-op. However, though accessed differently, the shooting ability is an obvious copy, but one which is often of limited use, enemies hiding away in parts of the scenery. This is quite typical of the game: the time limit too short or the levels too long.

Well-defined – if overly 'nice' – graphics are marred by major sprite glitches, but samples mixed with light music and effects provide a quality soundtrack. The difficulty is *Alex Kidd*'s worst fault, but as this increases lastability, it's no great stumbling block.

OVERALL 72%

A ZOOM WITH A VIEW

ZOOM!
Discovery Software International

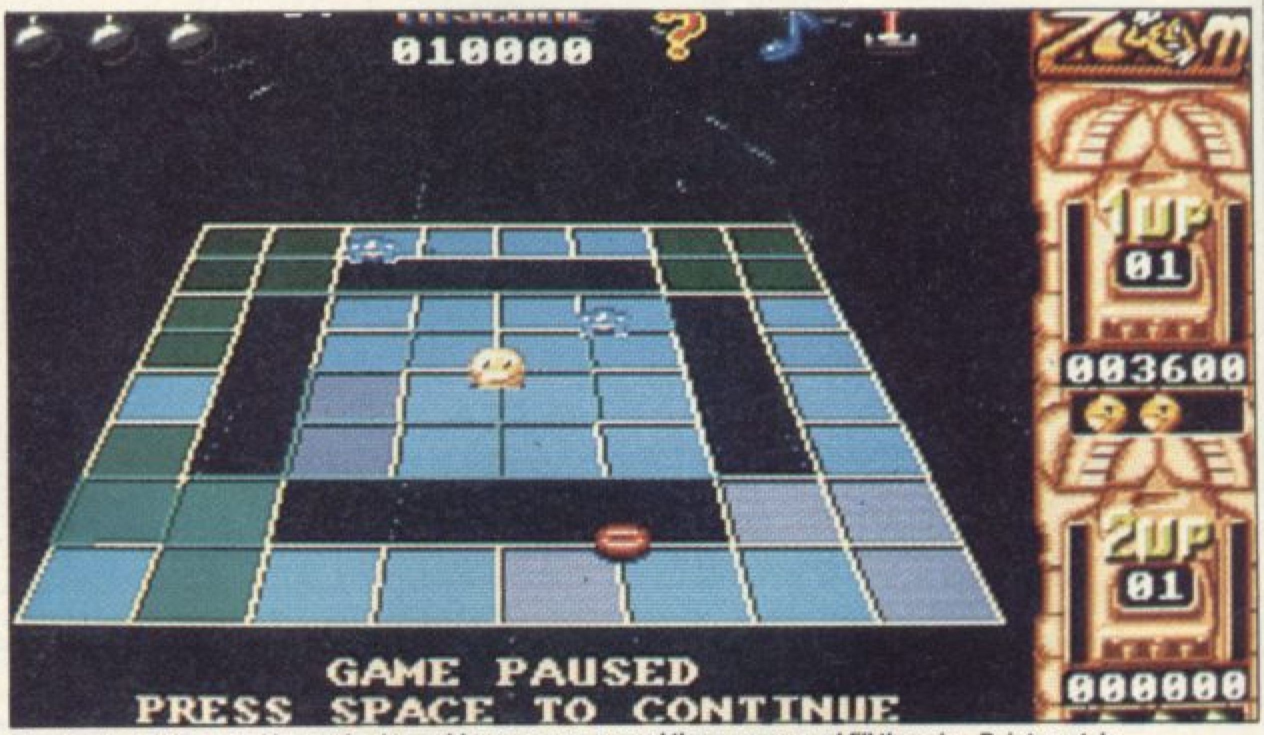
Zoom is a spherical character, but why he risks life and limb rushing around a grid while trying to fill in squares is not explained. **Frank Neuhaus** is the author of this amusing game, a 22-year-old West German student who previously wrote *Swooper* and *Mike The Magic Dragon*.

Zoom's gameplay is relatively simple. On each level globular Zoom fills in squares by running around all their sides before a time limit runs out.

Trying to prevent this geometric happening are Jaggernauts (deadly flapping lips), Wormletts (green sack-like things) and Angleheads (gray things with pointy heads). The latter two rub out your lines, making speed a necessity in drawing squares while they're around. Also to be watched out for are Black Holes which appear at random, blue gluey creatures that slow you down if you run over them, and Spheroids that can give hot pursuit.

Rocket
While Zoom hurries around Zoomland's grids various objects appear such as ice cubes (freeze the enemy), candy (makes you faster), money bags (points), apples (fill in four squares), magic potion (invulnerable until blue gauge runs out), rocket (next level), glue (slows enemy down) and question mark (any of the above, and can kill you as well). Pretty much standard arcade game fare, these options together with the basic gameplay produce a surprisingly addictive game.

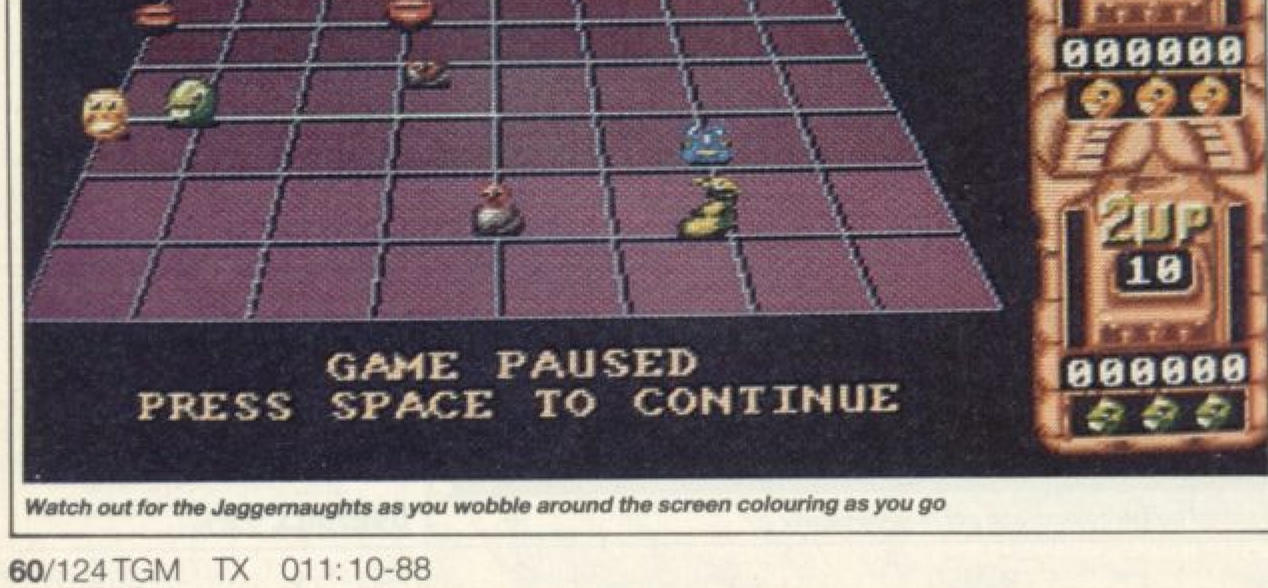
Additional lives can be earned at certain point totals and by picking up the right question mark. Unfortunately these occasions are few and far between making *Zoom!* rather tough. There's also a two-player option, either taking turns or with both on screen at the same time with a few more monsters. Furthermore you can choose to begin your game on any of the first 10 levels of the 50-level game.



Precise joystick control is required to guide your man around the squares and fill them in – Painter-style

OTHER VERSIONS

Conversions are imminent for ST, PC and Commodore 64. There are also plans for Spectrum and Amstrad CPC versions – if programmers can be found.



Watch out for the Jaggernaughts as you wobble around the screen colouring as you go

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.95

While nothing here breaks new ground for the Amiga everything's well done. The opening sequence, in particular, features a very impressive and amusing animated sketch. Thereafter sound FX are uniformly excellent and graphic presentation makes the most of the very basic game structure. Addictive and fun to play, Zoom! is well worth considering.

OVERALL 77%

"Addictive and fun to play, Zoom! is well worth considering"


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IK+
They called International Karate 'the greatest Karate beat 'em up yet' (Commodore User). And who are we to argue? But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip). Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD. And balls!
©1987 Archer Maclean ©1987 System 3 Software Ltd
SUPER SPRINT
Licensed from Atari Games' original money-spinning coin-op, one or two players compete head-to-head over eight gruelling tracks and four levels of game difficulty. Avoid the hazards and collect golden spanners to enhance custom car features – the key to Super Sprint. With detailed animation and sound effects, Super Sprint brings the best driving excitement ever to be experienced on home computers.
TM & ©Atari Corporation 1986. All Rights Reserved. ©Electric Dreams Software 1987.
RAMPAGE
The game where the nice guys don't get a look in. Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco. Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-man, need you to send them on a rampage in an enduring 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.
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BARBARIAN
THE STORY SO FAR...
The evil sorcerer Drax has sworn to wreak an unspeakable doom on the people of the Jewelled City unless Princess Mariana is delivered to him. However, he has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess will be released. From the wastelands of the North, comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness and free the Princess? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...
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VERSION UPDATE

ARMY MOVES
Imagine

Amiga: £24.95
Atari ST: £19.95

DINAMIC's first game released by Ocean was *Game Over*, whose advertising caused a stir due to the scantily clad warrior maiden featured, but was little more than a difficult horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up with an unusual title. *Army Moves* could be described as the sequel, despite its more present-day setting, because it follows a similar format.

It's your task, as a highly-trained commando, to battle through opposing forces on foot, by jeep and by helicopter, surviving the fearsome onslaught through varying landscapes to retrieve vital information held by the enemy in their headquarters's safe.

In the game's course there are seven stages. First you drive a jeep armed with ground-to-air and ground-to-ground missiles, facing waves of hostile jeeps and swooping helicopters.

Later, you steal one of the the enemy's helicopters to fly through the next three levels. This time air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles are fired, generally against plentiful fighter planes, desert missile silos, armed look-out posts and – over the sea – submarines.

In the jungle it's a foot slog through swampy terrain to the final shoot-out at the enemy HQ.

Both 16-bit versions retain the high difficulty of the Commodore 64 version. Variation is present between levels, but each stage is repetitive within itself, and too long to hold real interest.

Graphically, the Amiga's large sprites leave little room for manoeuvre – the ST going for the freeer range of small objects – but both make little use of the machines' power.

Sound – and suitably militaristic music – adds little to the atmosphere, but uses quite amusing voices on the Amiga. *Army Moves* is a game in which perseverance gives small rewards.

AMIGA: OVERALL 32%
ATARI ST: OVERALL 36%

Poor graphics and sound combine with incredibly tough gameplay to make Army Moves a below-average shoot-'em-up – Atari ST screen



VERSION UPDATE

FOOTBALL MANA
Addictive Games/Prism Leisure

PC: £19.99
Commodore 64/128:
Cassette £9.99,
Diskette £14.99

AFTER EXPERIENCING the delights of the PC's EGA graphics on games such as *Vixen* (see review on page 49 of this issue), *Football Manager 2* is a considerable letdown, with a colour scheme to match the inside of a used sick bag.

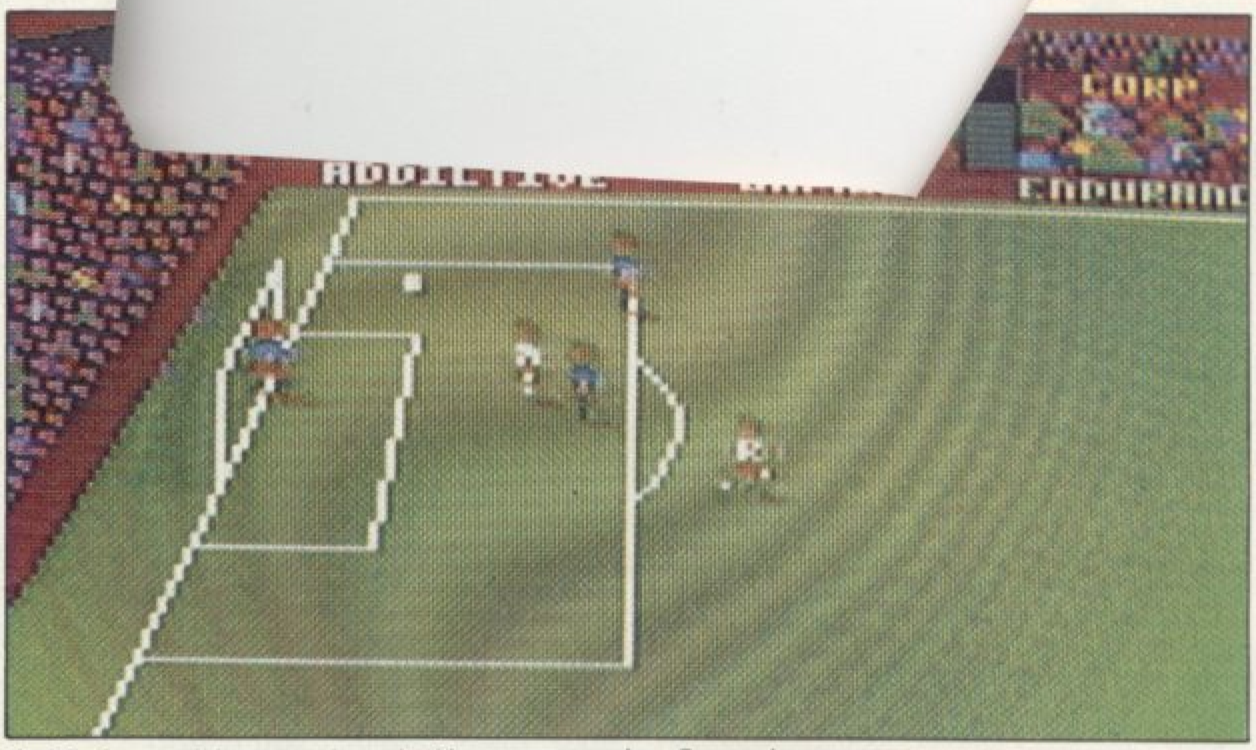
The Commodore 64/128 version is no better with its garish onfield graphics.

Play is similar to the other versions, presentation being the only difference. Team management is limited, featuring a basic screen layout and generally shallow interaction. The prematch selection screen is the only saving grace, as it allows you to define your team's tactics and leaves some control over their actions.

The PC features smooth animation of the footballers during match highlights – unfortunately

respec-
versions
two are the

64/128:



Awful colours and slow gameplay make this a poor conversion – Commodore screen

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AMIGA: OVERALL 32%
ATARI ST: OVERALL 38%

Poor graphics and sound combine with incredibly tough gameplay to make Army Moves a below-average shoot-'em-up – Atari ST screen



VERSION UPDATE

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2

Addictive Games/Prism Leisure

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Commodore 64/128:
Cassette £9.99,
Diskette £14.99

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The PC features smooth animation of the footballers during match highlights – unfortunately the C64 game does not, and in fact looks dire.

Colours accompanying the match highlights are ill-used, the screen update is slow, and sound non-existent on both versions.

Following the ST (TGM **008**, 65%), Spectrum, Amiga (TGM **009**, 63% and [illegible] respectively) and Amstrad versions (TGM **010**, 64%), these two are the worst versions.

PC: OVERALL 55%
COMMODORE 64/128:
OVERALL 52%



Awful colours and slow gameplay make this a poor conversion – Commodore screen

VERSION UPDATE

Electric Dreams Machine

SUPER HANG-ON

Electric Dreams

Atari ST: Diskette: £19.99

SINCE *Super Sprint* and *Enduro Racer*, Electric Dreams have released few ST games. *Super Hang-On* heralds the return of motorbike racing to the Atari 68000 processor in a slick conversion of the Sega coin-op. Amstrad CPC and Spectrum 48/128 conversions have already been released – the Commodore 64/128 effort was withdrawn following less than enthusiastic reviews.

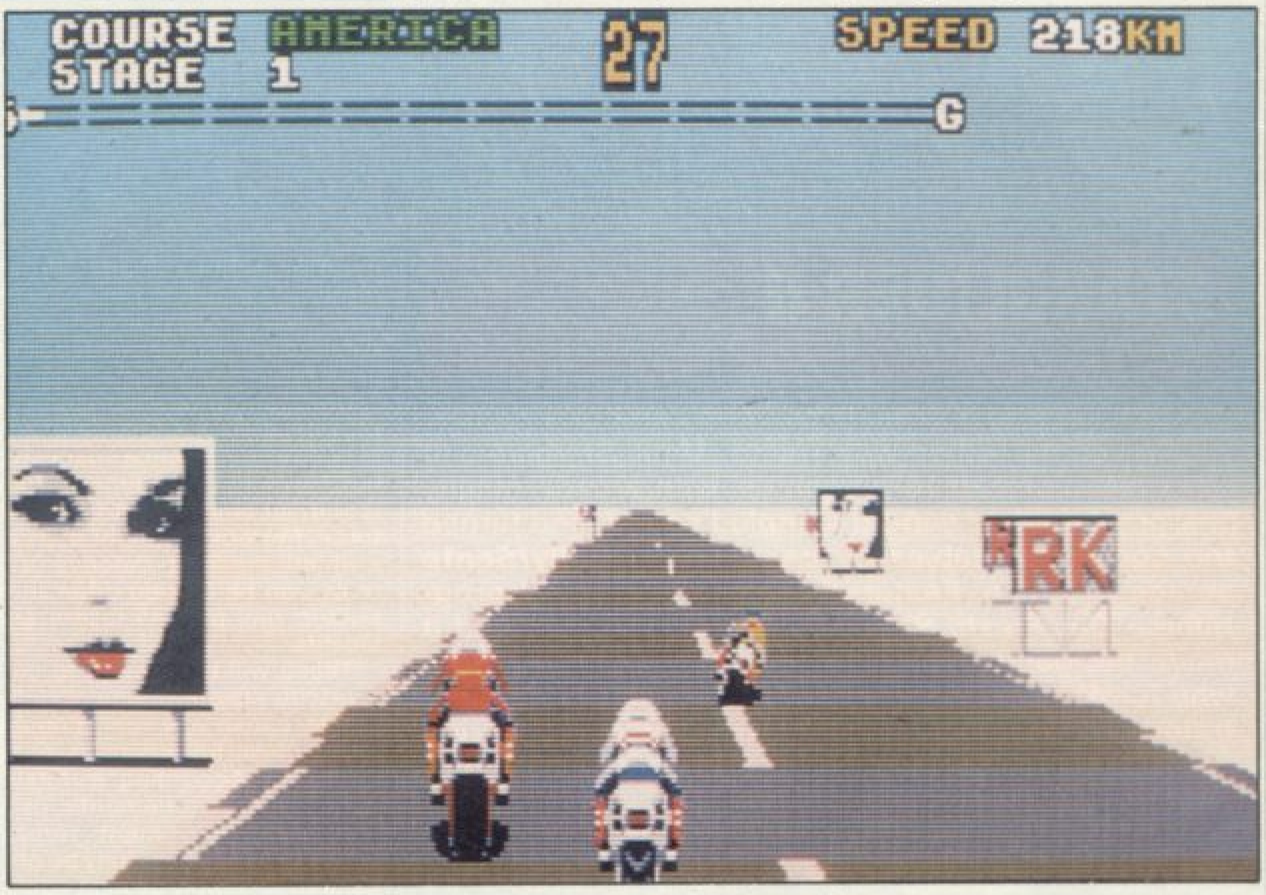
For the ST game **Zareh Johannes** undertook the programming, with graphics by **Focus** (responsible for *Knightmare*, *Aliens* and *Enduro Racer*) and music by **Source** who previously produced tunes for *Predator* and *Fire Trap*.

The scenario for *Super Hang-On* puts you on board a bike racing against the clock around four tracks from around the world.

Viewed from a behind-the-bike perspective, your objective is to make it to the goal with seconds to spare, passing through time-extending checkpoints en route. The four courses vary in length, the beginner course in Africa features six stages, Asia has ten, America 14 and the final course, Europe has a gruelling 18 stages.

Straights, tight corners, chicanes and near-hairpin bends all hinder your progress and require judicious use of the brakes. On the straights, you can speed-up to 280kph at which point the nitro accelerator may be engaged to rocket the bike to a hair-raising 324kph. Toward the end of each course progressively less time is awarded to get through to the next, where the road becomes even more tortuous.

Super Hang-On is one of the fastest moving race games yet seen on the Atari ST. The road undulates extremely well, twisting and turning with frightening rapidity. Roaring full throttle over the crest of hills towards unknown dangers is a nerve-wracking experience. The thrill of motorbike racing is heightened further by the game's near suicidal speed as the road and hazards fly past.



There's no time to admire the very smart landscapes as the clock ticks ever closer to zero

Response to mouse and joystick control is fast and precise, the game being equally playable using either method, although the redefinable mouse sensitivity option helps.

Graphically *Super Hang-On* is excellent, the bike and rider are highly detailed, colourful and well animated. Roadside signs and trees are superbly implemented, having detail, colour and variety.

Multi-load is kept to a minimum only working when a different course is chosen. On the 1040 ST all four courses are loaded at the start.

The four tunes of the coin-op have been kept but inevitably lose a lot of their raw power and entertainment value in the conversion process, although still quite good for an ST they are better with the volume low.

The quest for the best Atari ST racing game has hotted up recently with **US Gold**'s *Out Run*, *Roadblasters* and **Elite**'s *Overlander*. The Electric Dreams offering has hit the nail on the head, incorporating the all-important speed, quality graphics, a significant lack of multi-load and sufficient addictive qualities to keep you trying again and again to reach that distant goal. An excellent game.



Breath taking speed, slick scrolling, detailed graphics and smooth animation combine to make Super Hang-on *a must*

ATARI ST OVERALL 90%



IN THE QUIET SOLICE OF SPACE . . .

STARGLIDER II
Rainbird

Once, arcade machines became computer games. Never the other way round. Until *Starglider*. It revolutionised 16-bit games, with arcade-quality graphics and superb sampled sound, and turned the conversion tables by becoming a **Bally/Sente** arcade machine. Featured prominently on TV programme *Get Fresh*, *Starglider* is truly famous. And it made the games career of then-unknown **Jez San**, who for **Argonaut Software** had previously concentrated on utilities, only occasionally co–authoring games such as *Skyland Attack* and *Elite* on the Commodore 64/128.

Two years ago the avaricious Egrons had been routed from Novenia by the destruction of the Fleet flagship – Hermann Krud's mighty Starglider – by a single AGAV fighter. The Imperial Prator of Egron was displeased at this humiliation and ordered an elaborate plan of vengeance. The Solice system – a neighbour of Novenia – has been invaded and the seven moons of the planet Millway devoted to the building of an enormous weapons system . . .

Meanwhile on Novenia the two crew members of that crucial AGAV have become uniformly famous, but reacted in radically different ways. While Katra refused all material rewards, devoting herself to furthering the security of Novenia, Jaysan took all that was offered and lives in absolute luxury guarded by the temperamental robot Argo. When rumours of the Egrons' plans leak, Katra sets about arm-twisting him into saving Novenia once more . . .

Draggon Industries' Icarus prototype is a small, fast and very advanced police spaceship but Novenia lacks time to fully test it, let alone produce a task force. Moreover weight considerations mean no defence systems can be carried other than built-in gas plasma lasers and shields.

These will be enough to survive with – given sufficient skill – but to cause any real damage more powerful weapons must be found. According to intelligence reports elements of a resistance movement remain active in Solice, and may be persuaded to supply certain equipment. The most important item is a Neutron Bomb, but both the raw materials and the one scientist able to build it, won't be easy to find.

Speed and tactics

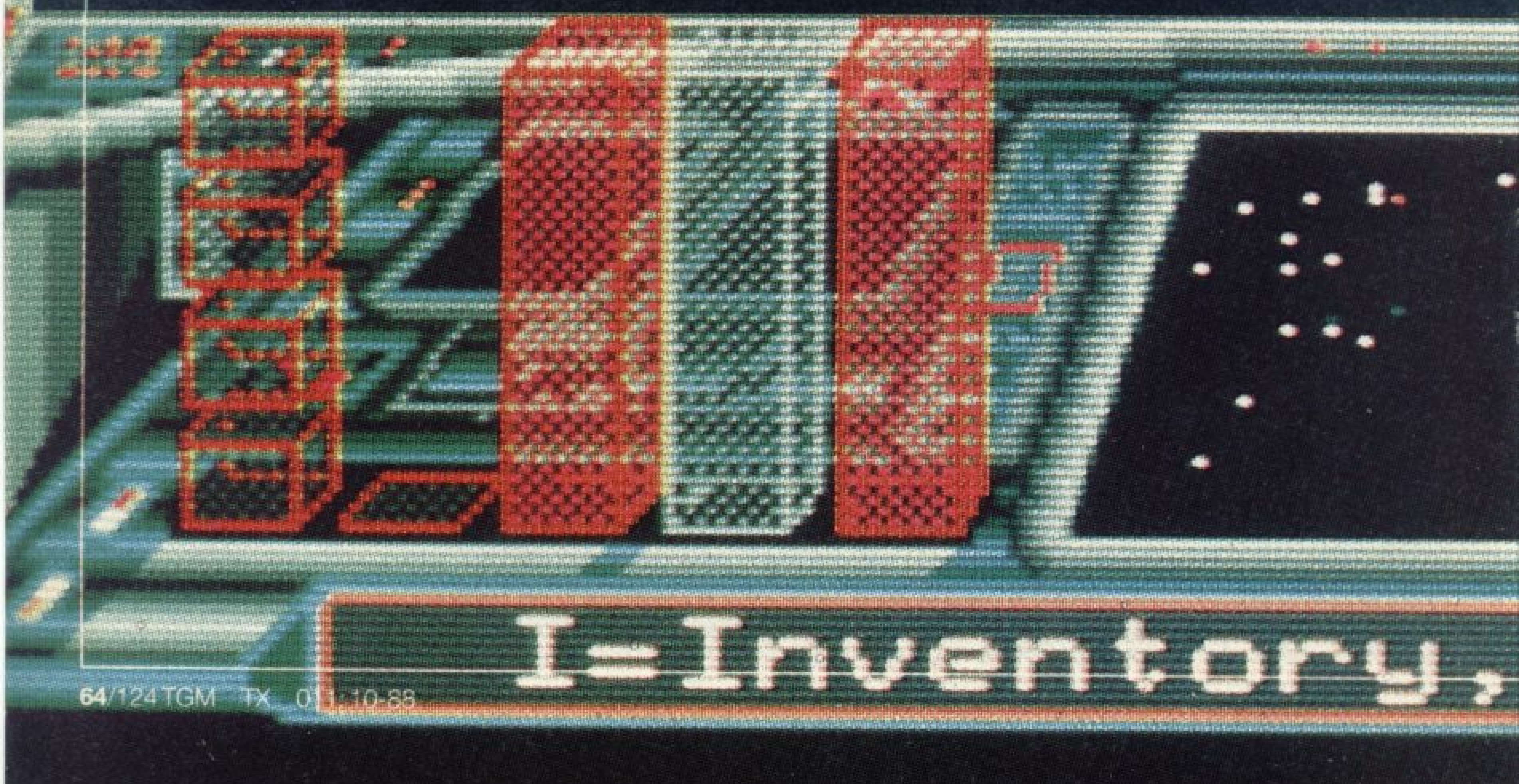
The Solice systems includes one sun, five planets and ten moons – plus a very hazardous asteroid belt.

All the moons and planets, except Millway, can be flown to and explored. A hyperdrive system ensures most flights only take a few minutes, but pirates, Egron fighters and asteroids can make the final approach to a planet very hazardous.

Once on a world you look for any objects the resistance might want, refuel by flying over powerlines or volcanoes, and shoot at the wide variety of Egron weapons returning your fire. Or you can explore below the surface of most planets, inside a complex system of tunnels.

If you should find an interesting object – like a Time-Warp Cube – then a transporter lock can be attempted and the cube placed in Icarus's hold. The transporter is crucial to the game, allowing an adventure element to augment the superb arcade and demanding tactical aspects.

Success in the game rests not merely on excellent reactions – though these are vital – but also in searching for various objects

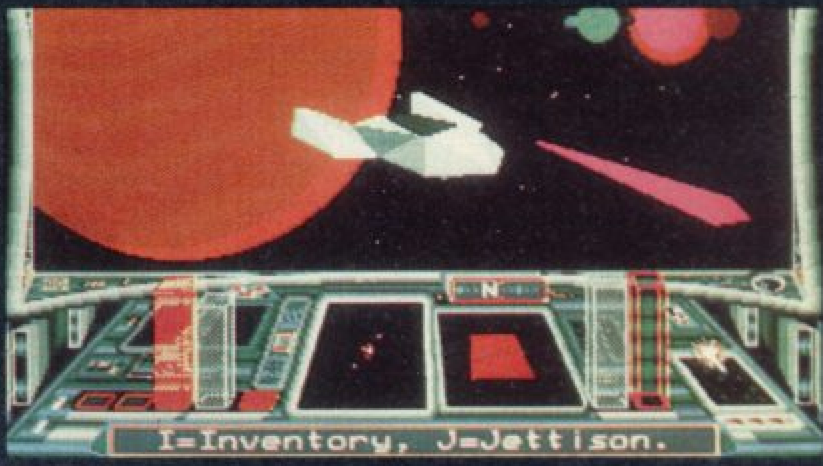




and making sure flights are planned with due attention to fuel consumption. Actually completing the game will take a lot of intensive playing, and not a few save/load disks as well.

Starglider II is not quite as innovative as *Carrier Command*. There are aspects of *Elite*, *Hive* and *Damocles* in there, but the end product is virtually incomparable. The mix of arcade action, tactical planning and exploration has never been done better. And presentation is simply dazzling.

Starglider II is surely destined not only to break software sales records, but most likely increase hardware sales too as it perfectly displays the potential of 16-bit machines. If the month were December, and we had a cast-iron assurance no more Rainbird games were due for release, we might even call it The Most Enjoyable Game of the Year . . .



Cruising through space, blasting lasers at all and sundry – what better way to spend a sunday afternoon? – ST screen

AMIGA Diskette: £24.95

The Amiga's graphics replicate the ST's precisely – and are equally amazing. What distinguishes the Amiga version is the audio department which fully matches the graphics with a great variety of distinctive sound FX in superb stereo. Magnificent!

OVERALL 97%



Dicing with death, you test your piloting skills by attempting to safely navigate an asteroid field – Amiga screen

ATARI ST Diskette: £24.95

This version is graphically astonishing. The speed, detail, animation and colour of the solid 3-D shapes are simply fantastic. Sound FX are a suitably impressive accompaniment to the visuals, creating a great sense of atmosphere. It's unlikely the ST has ever been better used. An instant classic.

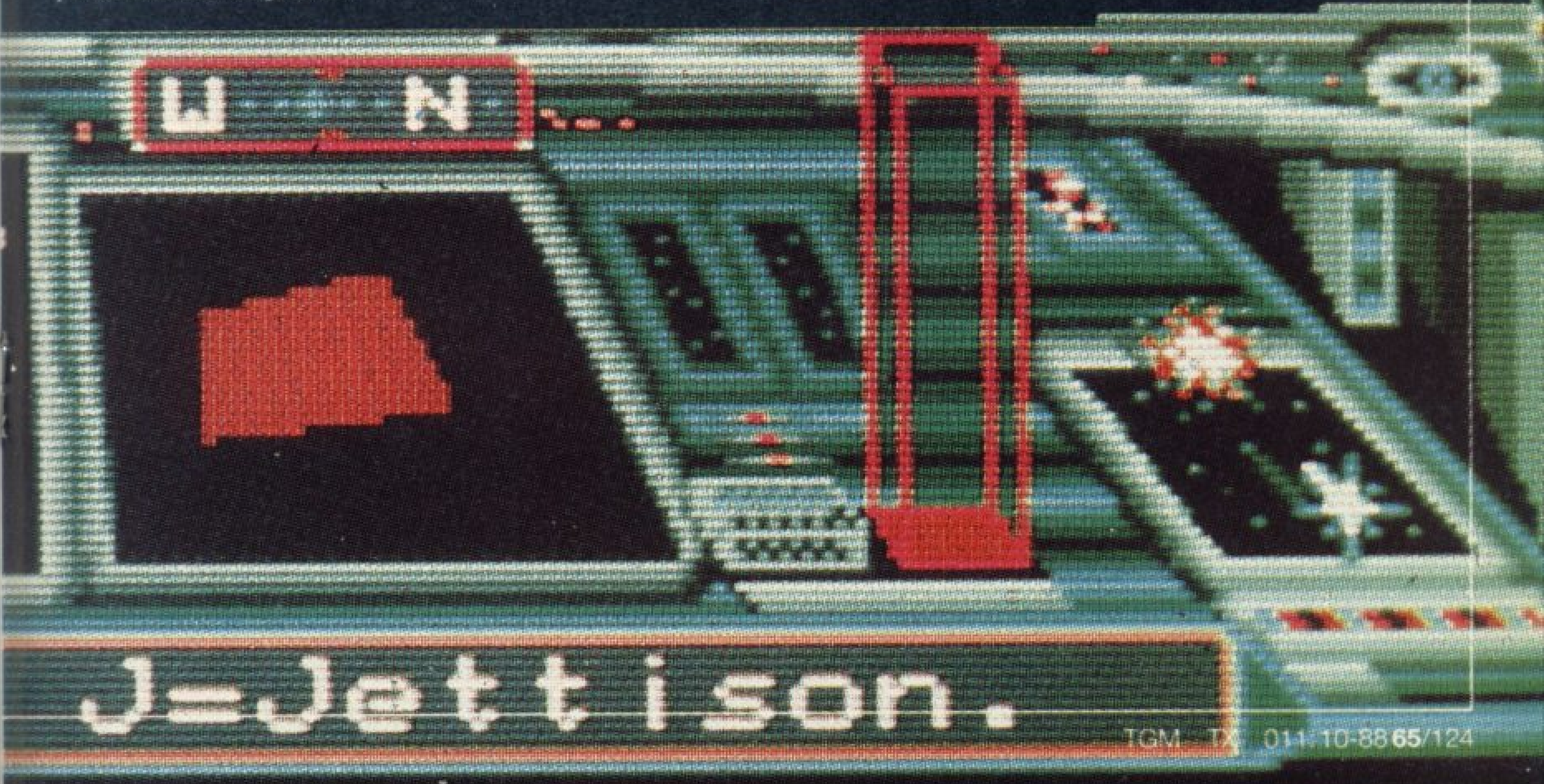
OVERALL 97%

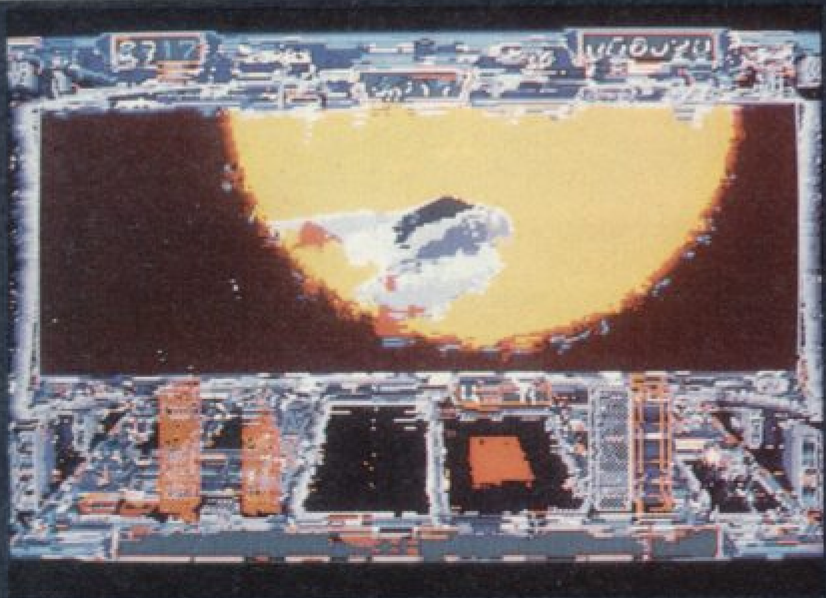


OTHER FORMATS

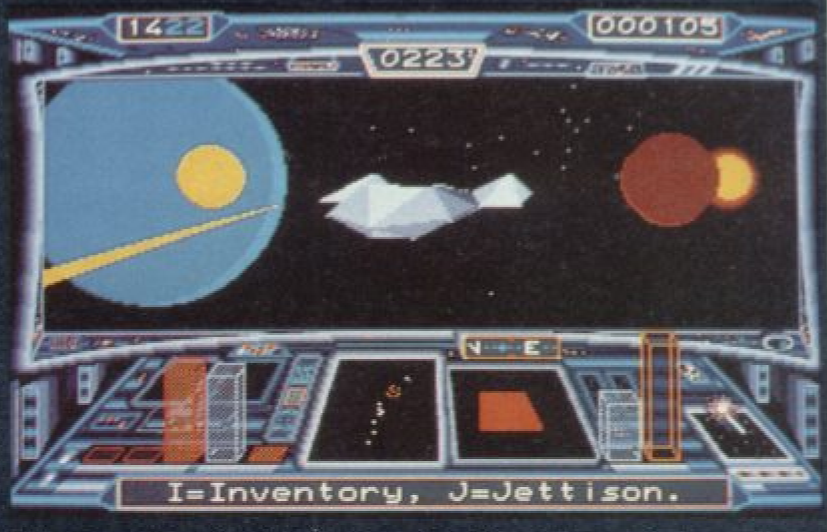
8-bit conversions are under active consideration and seem likely. A PC version is almost certain, but prices and release dates have yet to be set.

PRESS ANY KEY

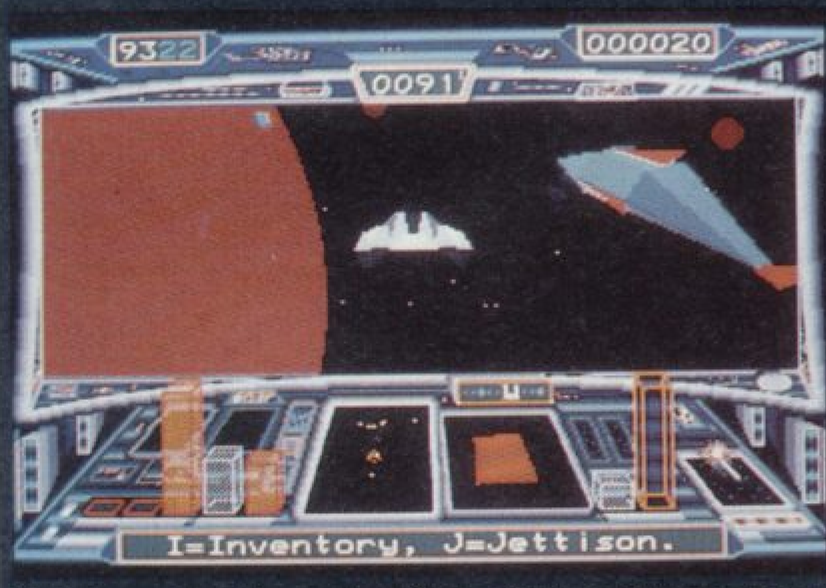




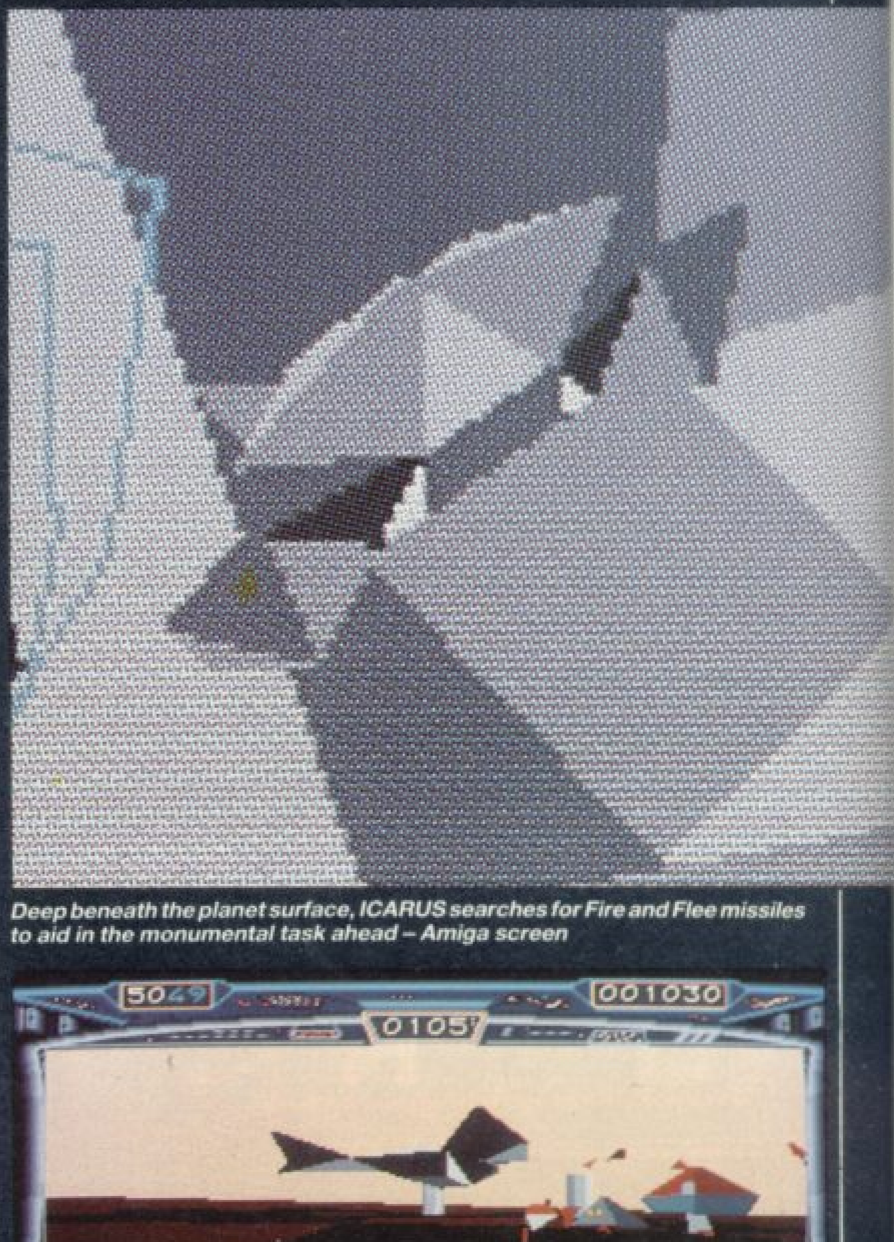
Flying too close to the sun results in a similar demise to that of your ship's namesake – ST screen



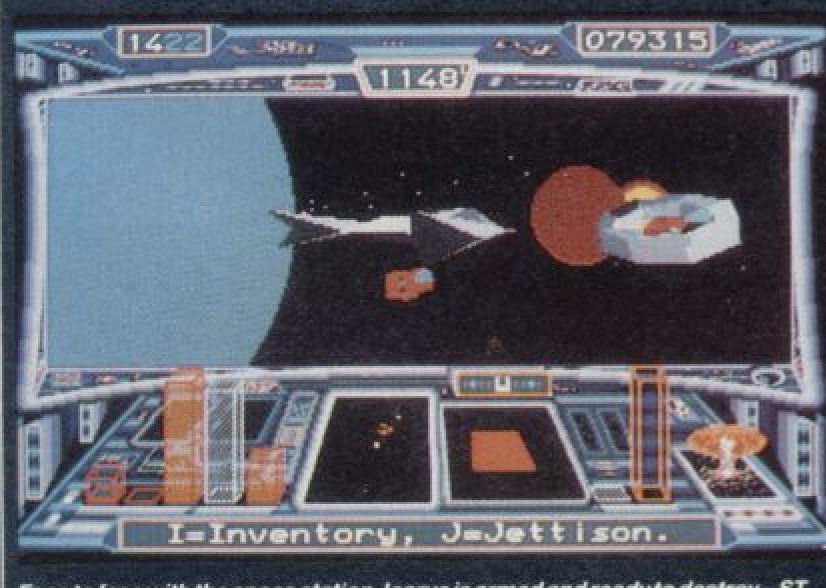
Flying in space, getting the feel of your Gas Plasma Laser – Amiga screen



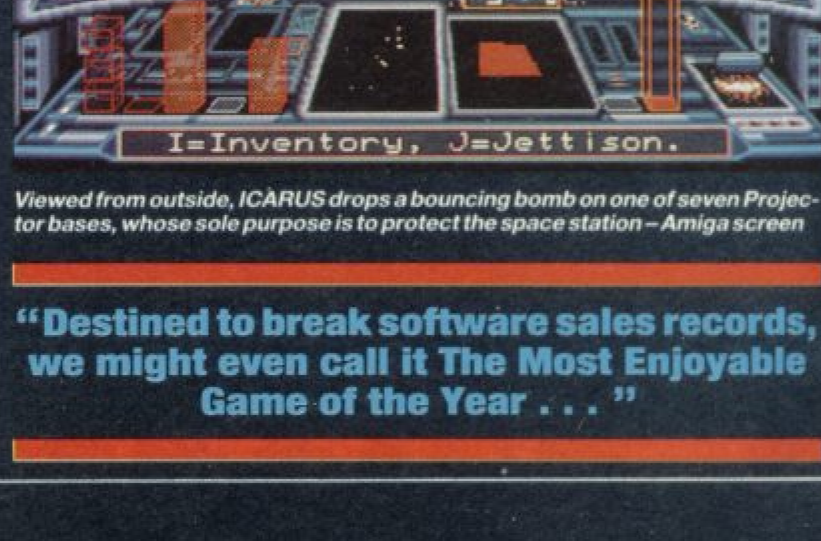
Whales in space? Catch one and trade it in for a flat diamond – they're only here to conquer the system anyway – ST screen



Deep beneath the planet surface, ICARUS searches for Fire and Flee missiles to aid in the monumental task ahead – Amiga screen



Face to face with the space station, Icarus is armed and ready to destroy – ST screen



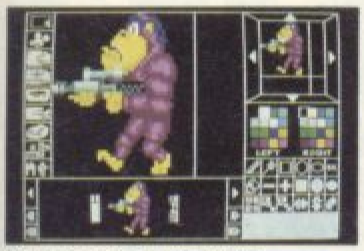
Viewed from outside, ICARUS drops a bouncing bomb on one of seven Projector bases, whose sole purpose is to protect the space station – Amiga screen



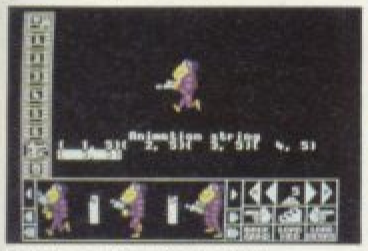
"Destined to break software sales records, we might even call it The Most Enjoyable Game of the Year . . . "

UNLEASH YOUR IMAGINATION WITH STOS

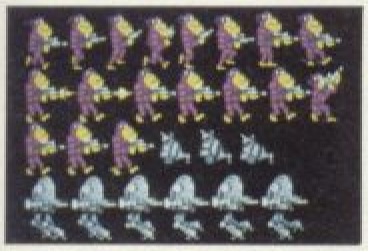
The Game Creator



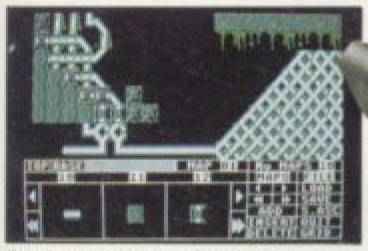
Design sprites using the powerful sprite editor



Set the sprites in motion with the animator section

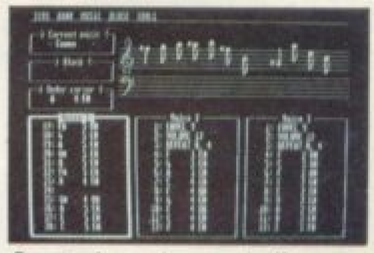


Choose from a range of example sprites included with STOS

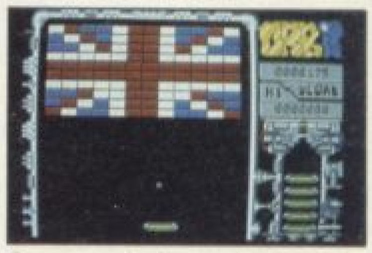


Produce a layout for each screen with the room designer





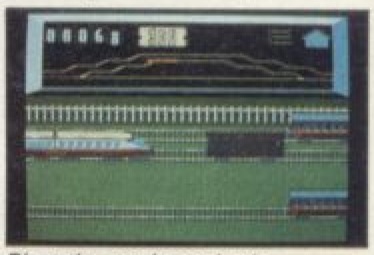
Create dynamic sound effects and compose a suitable score



Construct devious screens in the feature-packed Orbit game



Draw the flight paths of the attacking aliens in Zoltar



Blast the carriages in the horizontal-scrolling Bullet Train

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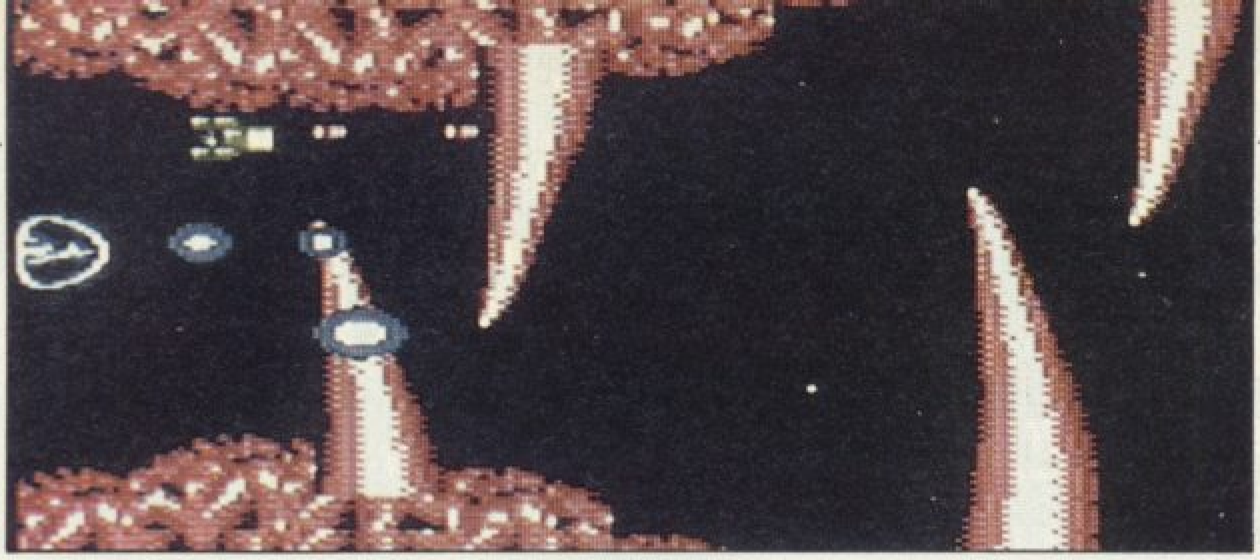
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Fangs for the memories – all the old arcade enemies (not to mention caption clichés) are here to infest your Commodore

BY THE TIME I GET THE PHOENIX

SALAMANDER
Imagine

Salamander is one of the best shoot-'em-ups around. Programmed by **Peter Baron** with music by **Mark Cooksey** (*Bomb Jack, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Overlander*) and graphics by **Bob Stevenson** (*IO*), it continues Imagine's trend for Konami coin-op conversions for us itchy–fingered shoot-'em-up addicts to feed on.

The evil Salamander raises his reptilian head once again and renews his threat to overthrow you and yours with his genocidal alien forces. All that stands between the alien attack and their target is a squadron of three star fighters, the fate of the galaxy rests in their hands.

Salamander is set over four levels, each one alternating between horizontal and vertical scrolling. You control the star-fighter as it flies through caverns of enemy forces cheerfully destroying waves of attacking aliens in the tried and tested manner.

Speed, missiles, forcefield, firepower multiples, rapid-fire lasers and ripple lasers are the bonus weapons left behind by defeated waves.

Should you be unfortunate enough to lose a ship, your weapon enhancements slowly drift off-screen, allowing you to regain them if you're quick enough.

The first stage is a horizontally-scrolling cavern, complete with formation-flying aliens, extending claws, gigantic fangs bursting from the very walls and the final end-level alien which, when defeated, allows access to the next level.

Killing slime

Level two features a vertically-scrolling asteroid storm, with waves of aliens to make the going tough. Aliens explode when shot, throwing lethal, fiery shards of metal everywhere – this is no joy ride when you also have asteroids to contend with.

Once through the storm and the final enemy waves, the mother alien enters the fray, its spider-like, metalic arms spinning in a catherine wheel of destruction. Defeat her and it's on to the third stage.

Level three features deadly solar flares bursting from top and bottom of the screen in great arcs of flame. Phoenixes emerge from the infernos to attack, together with the familiar aliens of the previous two levels. A giant fire snake guards the level-end, coiling around your ship to crush it unless defeated.

The fourth and final level is the alien fortress. Sentinel ships bar progress through the base, gun emplacements fire masses of bullets and Easter Island-type heads spit deadly rings.

Should you survive long enough to access the inner reaches of the base, the globe-like alien leader appears. Destroy its supports to kill it and exit quickly from the base through a series of rapidly-closing blast doors. Make it out and victory is yours.

The Imagine conversion of *Salamander* differs from the **Konami** MSX game in that it almost perfectly recreates the layout and alien attack patterns of the coin-op. The only things missing are the speech and dual-player option.

The progressive weapons element works extremely well – entertainment values and appeal improving with each new weapon collected. Unfortunately they can prove *too* powerful, leading to a loss of challenge and rendering the game easy to complete (one reviewer finished it in ten minutes – although he is a bit of an expert). So, tremendous presentation and great to play, but the lack of random alien attack patterns is drawback, making *Salamander*'s holding power doubtful.

COMMODORE 64/128 Cassette: £8.95, Diskette: £12.95

Graphically and sonically superb, Bob Stevenson has worked wonders in recreating not only the style but the atmosphere of the coin-op and Mark Cooksey's tunes are extraordinarily faithful to the original. With all the quality presentation, the game hasn't made it to the C64 in one go. The multiload at the end of each level is short on disk, but tape access is drawn out.

OVERALL 66%

OTHER FORMATS

Expect to see Salamander **on the Spectrum: cass £7.95, disk £14.95, and the Amstrad CPC: cass £8.95, disk £14.95.**

"Salamander **is one of the best shoot-'em-ups around"**

VERSION UPDATE

THE FURY
Martech

Commodore 64/128 Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £12.99

RIGHT from the mundane intro music, the Commodore version of this violent racing game is hardly different from its Spectrum and Amstrad sisters.

Just as in those versions, reviewed in TGM**009**, you start with a handful of credits and a full tank. Drive carefully, avoid collisions, and you'll be first past the post, earning credits to buy a more powerful car.

It all sounds so simple. But the damage indicator is exceptionally hard to read, just as it is in the other versions.

And that's irritating, because so much of the screen is full of irrelevant graphics. Only a quarter of the screen is actual play area.

Sound effects are minimal and graphics crude, but at least the Commodore 64/128 *Fury* is marginally more playable than the other 8-bit versions on the road.

COMMODORE 64/128: OVERALL 55%



The boring racing game hits the Commodore 64/128 to a resounding thumbs down – thankfully the music is quite good

DREAM STAR WARRIORS

STARRAY
Logotron

X *or* was Logotron's first game to make an impact – a mask-collecting puzzle strangely involving chickens and fish, and recently converted to the ST for the Atari Corporation. Their next game, *Quadralien* (Amiga version reviewed this issue), kept puzzle elements while introducing shoot-'em-up arcade action. *StarRay* is firmly in the latter mould, drawing inspiration heavily from the classic coin-op, *Defender*.

And that said, there's little point dwelling on the psycho-sociological story of a lad dreaming of being a Star Warrior hero like in his favourite TV programme and amazingly ending up becoming one through dint of hard training and clean underwear. After all, what we have here is not a space opera, but a latter-day *Defender*-type game with wonderful graphics.

There's also a tale to tell of galaxy-invading aliens and things – but what the hell, let the pictures do the work for once – you read the inlay when you get the game . . .

So, in your gull-winged StarRay ship, you must eliminate the aliens which roam the planet, a nose-mounted laser gun your main means of attack. The planet scrolls in parallax as you explore its surface, using a scanner near the bottom of the screen to show the relative positions of your enemies.

Your StarRay is shielded, but enemy hits deplete it. There are vaporisers, which destroy all aliens on screen, and bonuses released by dying aliens which increase your powers.

StarRay is an unashamed *Defender*, but this plagiarism can be excused, as such clones are lacking in 16-bit, especially of the graphical quality and playability present here. Colourful backgrounds combine with smooth five-layer parallax scrolling, over which well-defined sprites fly, giving an attractive revamp of the very old formula. Topped off with fine sound presentation, *StarRay* is an unpretentiously good 16-bit zap.

AMIGA
Diskette: £24.95

Being of a simple format, StarRay **is readily playable, and becomes addictive due to its competent programming and presentation. Unoriginal and not using the full 16-bit potential, however, this unspectacular release is probably of greatest appeal to those wanting a basic arcade shoot-'em-up.**

OVERALL 79%

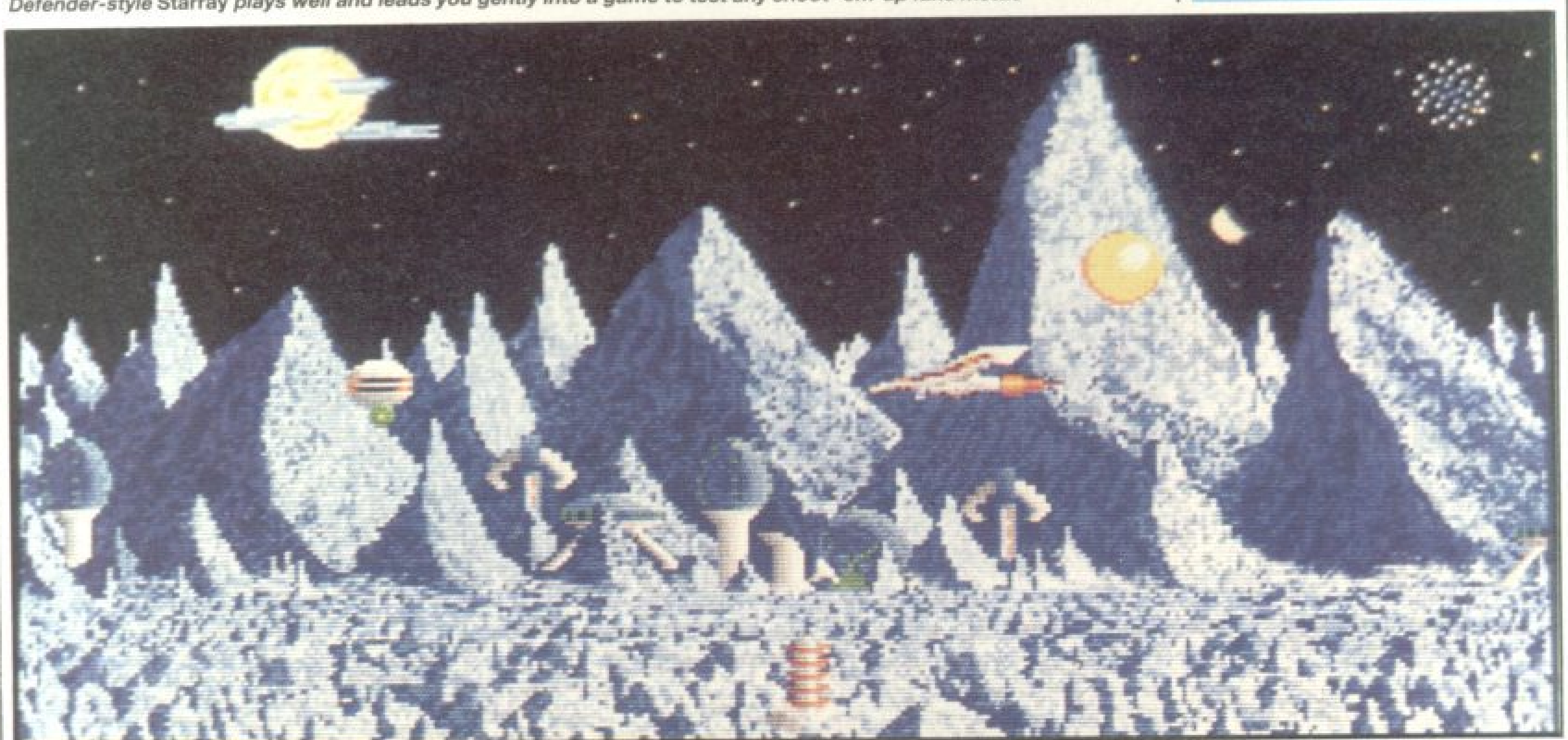
OTHER FORMATS

An Atari ST version is due to be released this month, £19.95, Commodore 64/128 and PC versions to follow, priced £19.95 and £24.95 respectively.

"StarRay **is an unpretentiously good 16-bit zap"**



Defender-style Starray *plays well and leads you gently into a game to test any shoot-'em-up fans mettle*



The atmospheric backdrops are beautiful, featuring glowing lights, bright colours, subtle shading and satisfyingly smooth scrolling

RESCUE SHUTTLE

INTENSITY
Firebird

Mindless shoot-'em-up programmer **Andrew Braybrook** (take that which way you like) continues on his quest – begun with *Mephisto* – for the deeper blasting game. Still with the **Graftgold** programming team but released under the Firebird label, his latest strategy-'em-up, *Intensity*, arrives amid a deafening silence of prerelease hype.

Attacking Space Station Canis Major (orbiting Sirius), with relish (and not a little mustard), aliens tear its surface and gnaw through its energy cables, stopping the work of the scientists aboard.

Little is known about the aliens except that they can mutate. In its crudest form, the creature is despicable enough, but given the opportunity, they develop into more powerful monsters, until they reach the ruthless Tracker evolutionary stage.

A rescue is organised. The plan is to use a remote-control drone to transport the scientists to escape shuttles and hence safely back to earth. Even this is extremely treacherous, as, wearing spacesuits, they have to traverse the outer shell of the station to get to the craft – while aliens do what they do best all around them. Even then, safety is by no means assured, as the drone is vulnerable to attack.

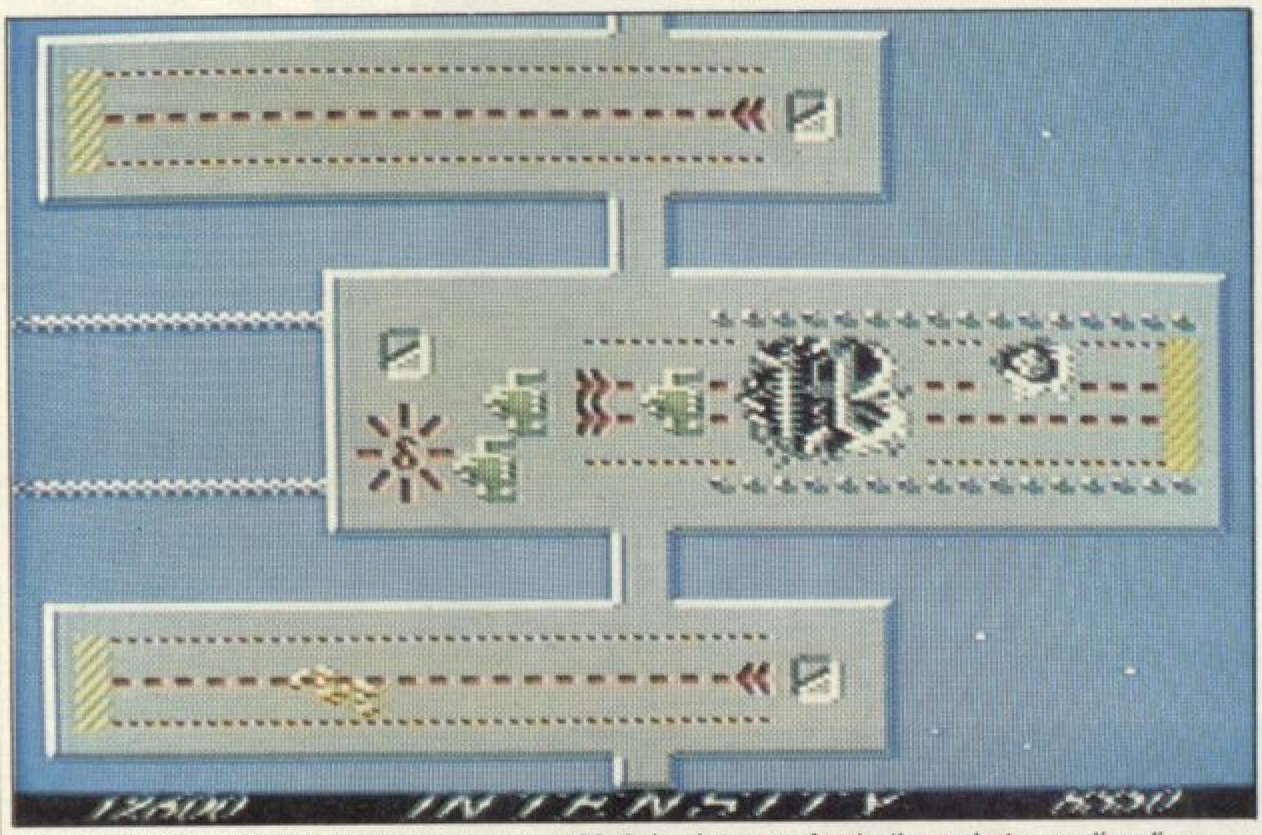
You are a pilot charged with helping the scientists escape. Your ship is a Skimmer – a customised mining craft – its cutters your only means of defence against enemies. It features equipment which the remote-control drone homes in on when activated.

Fantasy drone

Canis is made up of five layers, Alpha to Epsilon – all have 16 platforms. These are single-screen playing areas consisting of a number of airlock hatches from which a maximum of 15 colonists can be rescued. They head for the remote drone and board if their path is not restricted by obstacles or gaps. You use your Skimmer to manoeuvre the craft to a position accessible to the scientists.

Movement of both your Skimmer and the drone is dependent on the height of features on the current platform's surface. Each vehicle has a limited hover height. You begin with a standard Gamma Skimmer, but can purchase better vehicles by collecting monetary Resource Units released each time a colonist boards the drone. Alpha and Beta drones have higher speeds than the ordinary Gammas, but a fixed altitude of ten metres – the production of additional vehicles is similar in concept to that in *Morpheus*.

Beginning on Gamma One, the number of colonists collected determines which screen is played next. Tactics are necessary to choose a suitable path to a shuttle on platform 16, especially as skimmers and drones are more expensive on difficult layers.



As scientists scurry across the Space station, your craft is their only source of protection against marauding aliens.

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £12.95

Graphically, Intensity **features the familiar Braybrook bas-relief style although with no scrolling. Gameplay is restricted because of this, even claustrophobic at times. The tight manoeuvring necessary may prove more attractive to well-balanced arcade players than to trigger-happy shoot-'em-up fans. Music and sound FX are excellent.**

OVERALL 75%

OTHER VERSIONS

A Spectrum version is planned for release at the end of September, priced £7.95 on cassette.

"More attractive to well-balanced arcade players than trigger-happy shoot-'em-up fans"

VERSION UPDATE

Barbarian
Melbourne House/Psygnosis

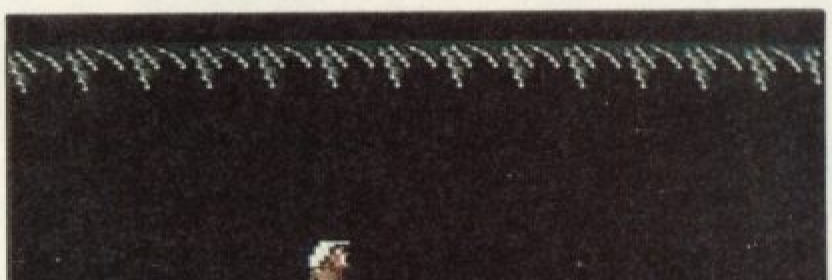
Commodore 64/128:
Cassette £9.99.

AS WE REVEALED last month on reviewing the Spectrum version, heroic Hegor the Barbarian was taught by his father to womanise get drunk and slay dragons. No wonder, then, that when the Temperance Society sent a dragon to slay dad, the brawling son vowed revenge.

On the Spectrum, this Psygnosis 16-bit original achieved 81%, comparing well with 87% on Amiga and 80% on Atari ST (TGM **002**).

In his Commodore 64/128 form Hegor has inexplicably changed hair colour to white. His animation also lacks some frames of animation. These are both minor details among the other graphical discrepancies. A scrolling display would have been simple to include, given the Commodore's capabilities, but oddly the next screen is hurriedly dragged into view as each room border is reached.

The bas-relief graphic style of the stone-and-wood fortress construction gives a misplaced hi-tech atmosphere to what is supposed to be a medieval caper. And middle-of-the-road sound effects are a disappointment. A few samples of reasonable quality could have been used with little trouble.



Hegor the white-haired walks on air to impress Necron's hordes

COMMODORE 64/128
OVERALL 60%

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1943
GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE

JOIN THE THALAMUS *Gold Rush* – BRAINSTORMER COMPETITION. See inside.

FIRST CLASS POST HOLOCAUST

WASTELAND
Electronic Arts

It took **Interplay** two years to develop *Wasteland*, and judging from the success of their *Bard's Tale* series the programmers could have another UK hit with this role-playing Commodore 64 and PC game. Meanwhile, they're not hanging around in the wasteland – elsewhere in this month's TGM Stuart Wynne reports on Interplay's forthcoming game of the cyberpunk classic *Neuromancer*.

The inevitable has happened – World War III rages across the globe, and missiles fly as the superpowers suffer horrific damage.

By pure luck large regions of America are left unscathed. But the threat of drifting, life-mutating radiation remains.

Out of this chaos, a group of survivors band together in the bleak desert to create a sanctuary outpost called Ranger Centre. And to aid other survivors they form the Desert Rangers.

The game starts in the Centre, where you lead a small party of four Rangers. They are equipped only with the bare minimum of weapons and objects – and no money.

But as in most role-playing games the situation quickly changes as you encounter people, gain information, collect objects, and use skills to get to other regions.

And as you grow richer, you can even hire more Rangers.

As well as the usual personal statistics of strength, intelligence and dexterity, each Ranger can have special skills such as the use of weapons, lock-picking, medical expertise, perception and swimming ability. The advanced skills require high intelligence.

Lone ranger

Your party is represented by an overhead view of a solitary figure as he moves across what's left of southern California and Arizona. Mountain ranges, deserts, forests and plains make up most of the terrain, often proving impassable or too hot to move through without a guide or special equipment.

Most of the creatures are hostile too, so take care to fire *before* you see the whites of their eyes. At close quarters you need to switch to knives and other hand-to-hand weapons to stand a chance of surviving.

Killing creatures earns experience points, which can lead to promotion and extra strength.

But some of your enemies are human. Cities and dwellings are littered through the empty deserts, including what's left of Las Vegas, a small town called Quartz and a larger town called Needles, where strangers are not welcome.

As you wander through the streets and buildings of these isolated communities, complete with slimy horrors in the sewer system, the townsfolk may plead with you to help them. Accepting the plea takes you to a subplot where you might be forced to battle marauding bandits or rescue hostages.

For Desert Rangers who get completely lost in post-holocaust America, a *Wasteland* Cluebook will be available from Electronic Arts at £5.

And *Wasteland* comes with a booklet supposed to enhance the atmosphere – you read a paragraph when prompted by the computer. This interactive element is an excellent touch which moves the game away from the same authors' *Bard's Tale* style, giving it much more depth.

But the challenge is not as strong as *Bard's Tale 3 – The Thief Of Fate* (TGM**010**, 84%).

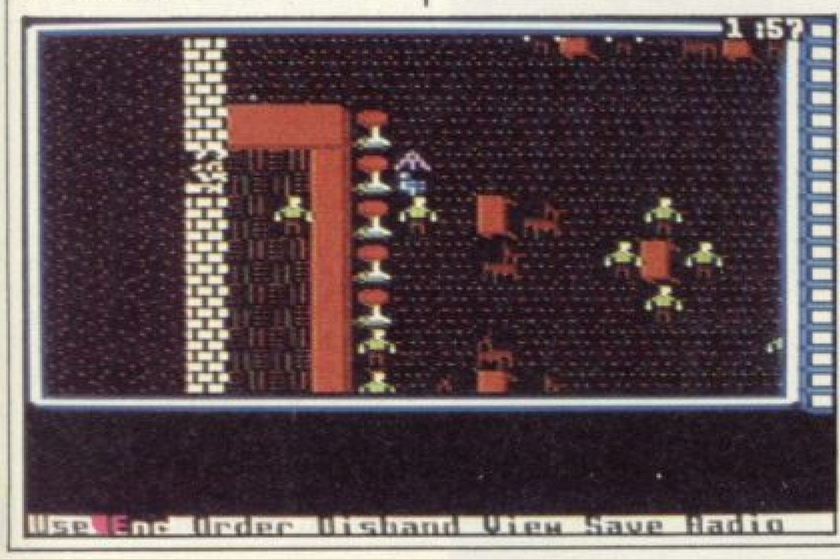


Your band of Desert Rangers may be the only hope for those unfortunate people caught in the aftermath of the holocaust

If it's worth doing once, it's worth doing twice: the Interplay programmers show Wasteland action in the same style as their Bard's Tale. Your party's main statistics take up the bottom third of the screen, results are on the upper right, and the creatures encountered are shown on the left.

OTHER VERSIONS

Wasteland **is due for release on the PC in October priced £24.95.**



COMMODORE 64
Two diskettes: £16.95

Wasteland **is big – all four sides of the two disks are used. But disk access doesn't interfere with the game – you only have to wait when you encounter something or enter a town. And despite the simplistic and dated blocky graphics used to depict movement, in the encounter sequences there is attractive animation similar to** The Bard's Tale.

OVERALL 81%

"The encounter sequences have attractive animation similar to The Bard's Tale"

THREE'S A CROWD

Players

Players are synonymous with budget software, their previous 16-bit products retailed for £9.95 (*Hollywood Strip Poker* and *Joe Blade* to name but two). Their latest titles have been upped in price to £14.95 for reasons of greed . . . probably. Are they worth the extra? TGM is on the case!

ATRON 5000

Amiga: £14.95

FOREMOST among Players' Amiga trio, this game was programmed by **Tobias Binsack** of **Softgang**. Clearly inspired by the light cycles in the movie, **Tron**, he titled his game *Tron 5000*, a name amended by Players by the simple expedient of adding an 'A'.

There have been numerous light-cycle games but *Atron 5000* is distinguished by its split screen, giving each cycle its own view. This is the same even when playing the computer, rather than another player, with similar temptation to fatally take your eyes off your own screen and see how your opponent is doing.

The basic rules of the game are simple; each cycle leaves a wall behind itself which can be used to box in the opponent – or even yourself. To add some complexity, scrolling landscapes feature buildings to reduce manoeuvring room. There are 12 different landscapes in all, each of which is played twice – except for the final one which is played three times.

What makes *Atron 5000* unique, however, are all the items which can be collected. These include red bombs, which delete the track of the red player, red speed-ups which simultaneously reduce the speed of the yellow player. Yellow equivalents do the reverse of the red items, but what is good about these features is that any player can pick them up and activate them. Thus if the red player collects a yellow speed-up he can wait until the yellow player is in a tight spot, then accelerate him into a wall.

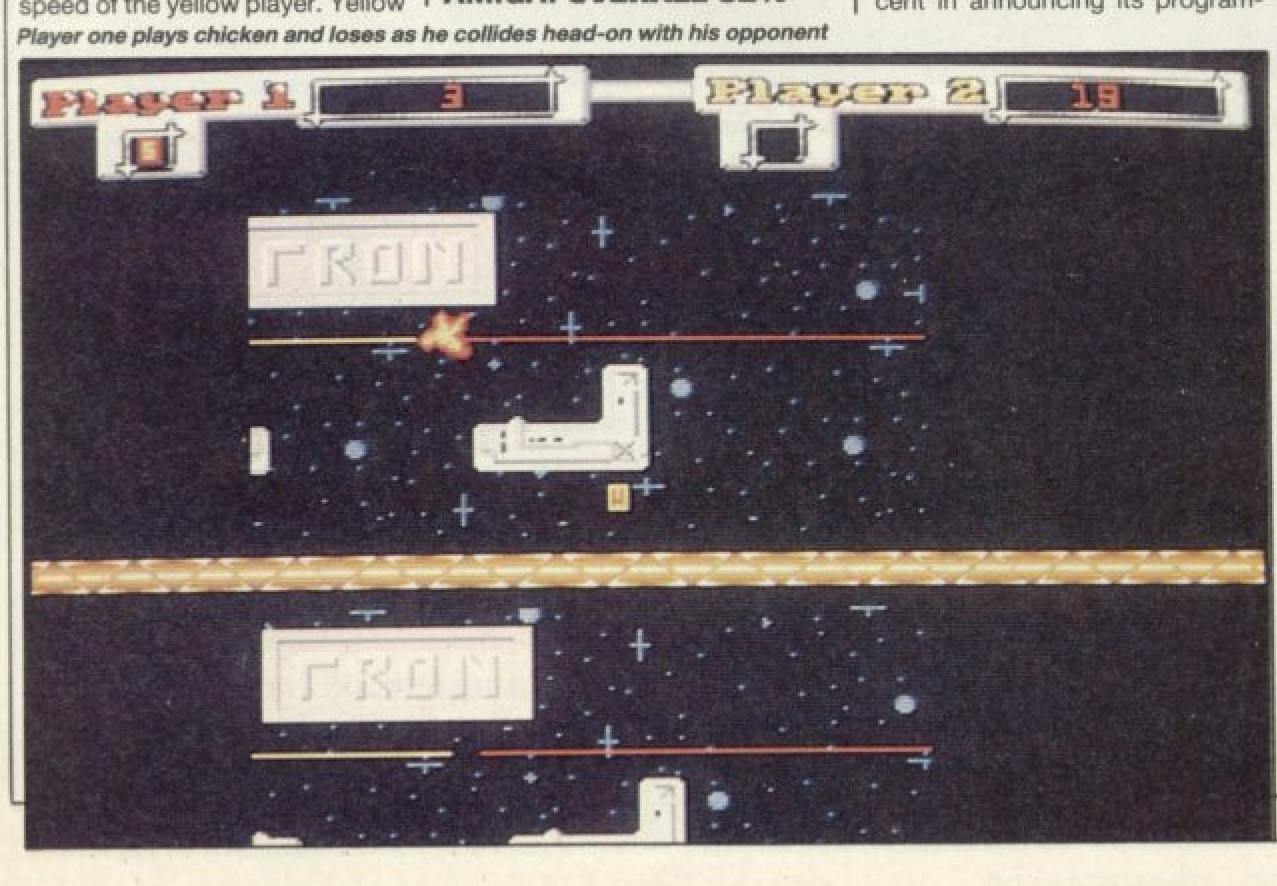
The two other items are missiles (which cut a very fine line through obstacles) and walls, which appear directly in front of your opponent.

Three game speeds and a computer opponent adept at going through his own, diagonal tracks – as you may, if careful – add further to the fun.

The graphics are mediocre, sound is merely effective and the basic game style is dated; only the smooth scrolling does justice to the machine. Yet this is the game which everyone has been playing in the office this month. The sheer, sadistic pleasure of dropping a wall in front of your opponent in a head-to-head contest is simply incomparable. While the long-term appeal is dubious, *Atron 5000* is extremely addictive, and if you've a friend to play it with – buy it now!

AMIGA: OVERALL 82%

Player one plays chicken and loses as he collides head-on with his opponent





SARCOPHASER

Amiga: £14.95

RAINBOW ARTS provide the third Players budget release, programming by the **Hack & Slay Team**.

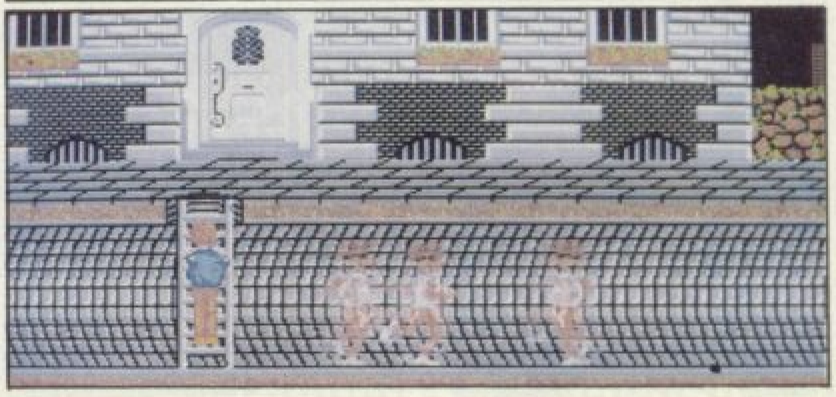
Setting the scene is a 14-page short story by Joachim Deegm which is primarily interesting for some amusing mistranslations. The game is, in fact, a very close relative of the *Salamander/Nemesis* games, with a single ship flying through various areas, destroying all in its path before confronting the mothership at the end of each. If all the aliens in a wave are destroyed, a green energy-pack is dropped, once collected and the space bar pressed, the highlighted feature is activated. More packs mean better weapons.

The features are Power, Back (rearward firing gun), Whiz (micro-ship whizzing around ship firing) and Smart Bomb. At any time a player can also flip between large ammunition and smaller, more rapid, fire.

Graphics are generally effective and occasionally attractive. Sound effects are good and the intro tune is excellent. Unlike some ST-to-Amiga conversions, the scrolling is at least smooth, while gameplay is simple and effective.

Overpriced but nice enough to play.

AMIGA: OVERALL 62%



STREET GANG

Amiga: £14.95

THE TITLE PAGE carries an enigmatic 'W', but that apart, this nadir in games is understandably reticent in announcing its programming parents. A *Time Warp* intro indicates they might have had something to do with it, however.

Our hero Mickey is a member of New York's toughest street gang. Brushing aside the questionable ethics, Players inform us that his initiation test is to fight through New York's streets, ghettoes and sewers before finally confronting 'The Curl' – a notorious gangland leader. Cue standard – and mediocre – beat-'em-up.

Mickey runs, jumps, stoops and climbs through waves of mad joggers armed with spray cans – it must be their contents that disintegrate hit joggers into the incredibly garish blats of orange flame. And there's the standard extra-nasty around as well.

Bonus screens fail to lift proceedings and later levels add chair-bound handicapped people and fatties to the tasteless charade. In terms of graphics, animation and gameplay this would make an amazingly bad Commodore 64/128 game, on the Amiga it defies description. There's a good tune though.

AMIGA: OVERALL 19%

A TAXING ROAD

ELIMINATOR
Hewson

According to Hewson there isn't a hot rod, beard or even electric guitar to be found in this dramatic road game. Nevertheless *Nebulus* author **John Phillips**'s high-speed blast-'em-up is the perfect game for playing with ZZ Top blasting in the background.

Possessing all the social values of a brain-dead rock fan on acid, the game's namesake emerged from subterranean depths one previously fine day, floored the accelerator and started eliminating. Passing from planet to planet the Eliminator appears intent on wiping out all in its way. Close encounters of the terminal kind, you might say. Naturally house prices have plummeted in neighbouring solar systems.

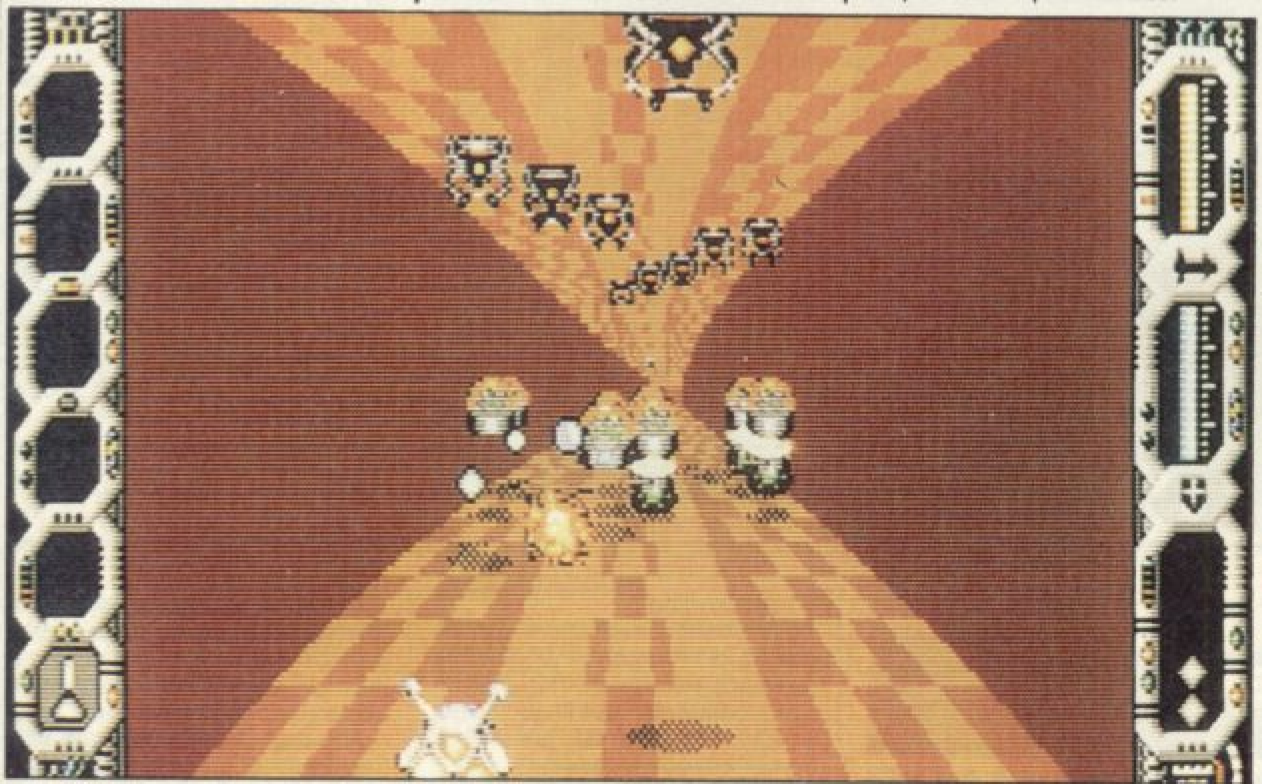
Macho man
Being an Eliminator is far from an easy life, however. The roads these days are in a fine state, what with massive lights, barriers and fires haphazardly scattered about. Slaloming through a massive array of lights takes fast reactions, and macho values demand brakes remain an entirely alien concept.

Speaking of aliens, some of them actually have the gall to resort to violence in their own defence, attacking in elaborate, swirling patterns. Hits can drain your shield, and should one of these clumsy creatures collide with you, a life is lost.

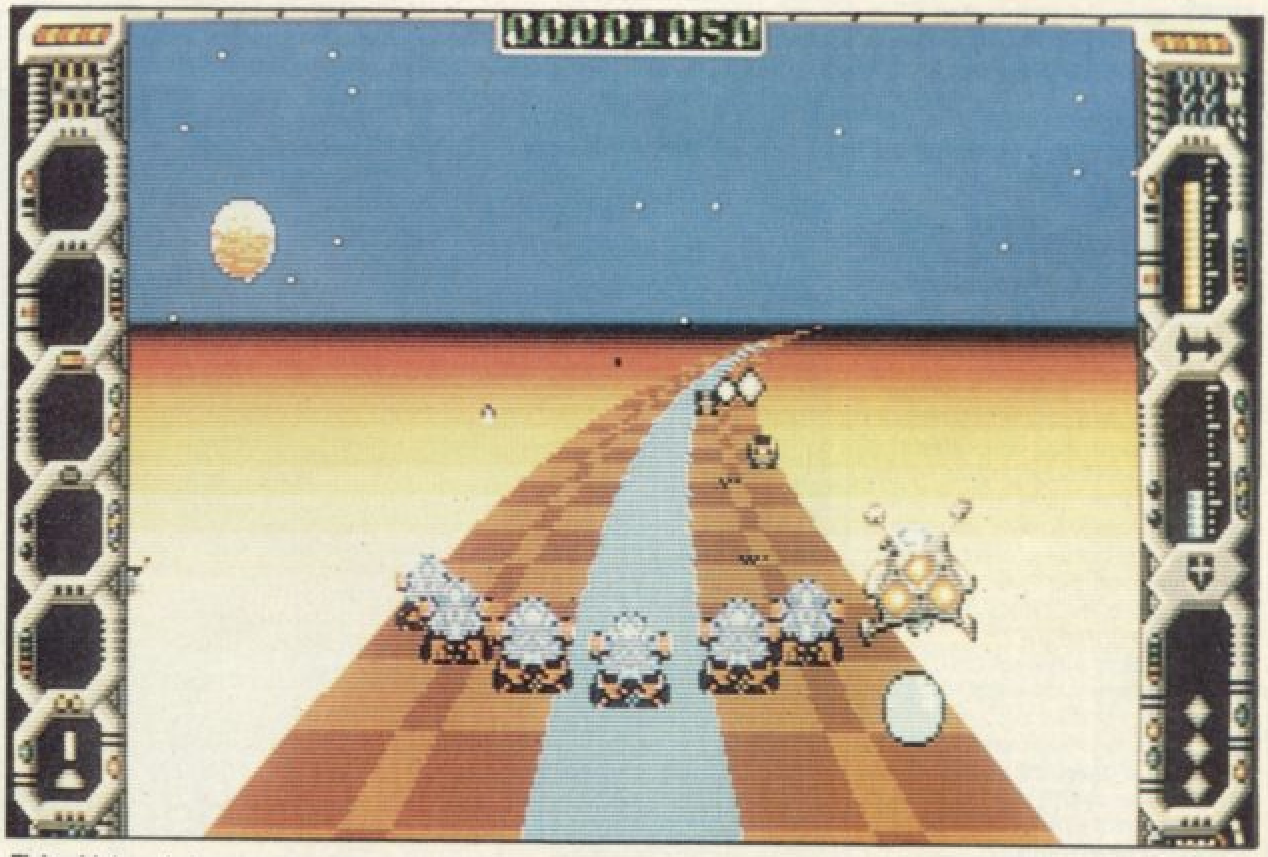
While wondering why you pay road taxes, be assured that orange and blue shapes can be picked up – at no extra charge – to top up ammunition and add special weapons. Once obtained weapons can be selected by up/down on the joystick. Ranging from side-fire cannon to bouncing bombs to triple-fire guns, they're all lost should a crash occur.

High-speed encounters with immovable objects are, in fact, a particular danger when being flipped, via ramps, on to the roof of long corridors. There should be no pause in the eliminating, however, if you want the extra life obtained every 10,000 points.

Additional solace for would-be eliminators suffering the occasional death is a password system – complete a few levels and a password is given allowing some lower levels to be skipped. As with *Better Dead Than Alien*, the toughness of getting to these passwords ensures the game never becomes easy, while passwords help reduce repetitiveness.



Eliminator, as its name suggests, is a case of cruising planets in an effort to destroy everything in your path



Flying high and shooting from the hip in one of 14 levels making up Eliminator

ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.99

Play it on a big TV screen, with atmospheric grime on screen, and you might think you were in the arcades. The flare of the appropriate engine when turning left or right is only one example of the graphical detail, while the speed and smoothness with which curves, hills and various aliens approach has to be seen to be believed. The sound FX and continuous tune aren't quite up to standard of the graphics, but are still quite good. SF roadblasting in fastforward mode, addictive and very tough.

OVERALL 92%

OTHER FORMATS

Next out of the factory is the Amiga game (£19.99), after a slight delay Spectrum (£7.99 cass, £12.99 disk), Amstrad and Commodore (both £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk) versions will follow.

"SF roadblasting in fastforward mode, addictive and very tough"

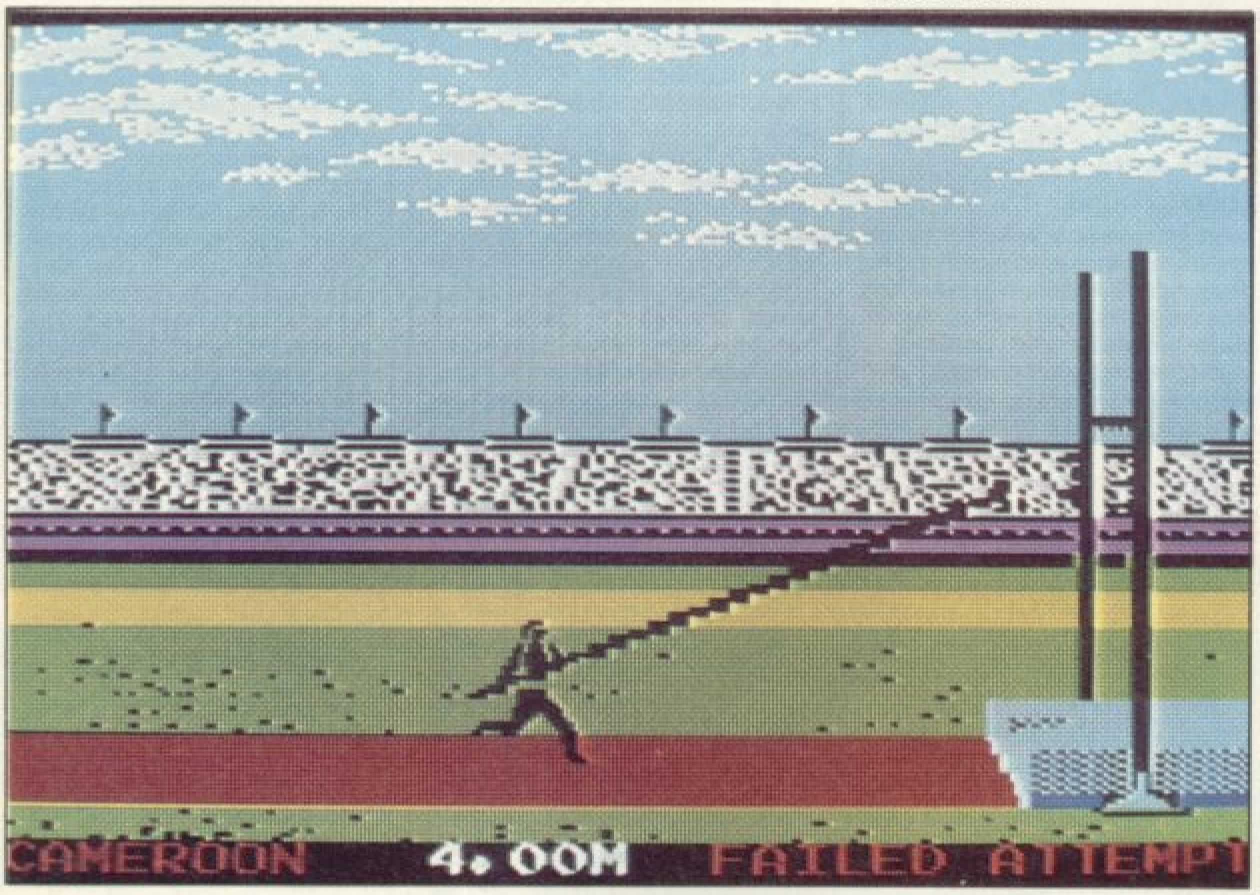
VERSION UPDATE

SUMMER GAMES
Epyx

Spectrum 48/128: Cassette £14.99, Diskette: £17.99
Amstrad CPC: Cassette £14.99, Diskette £24.99

A BOTTLE of fizzy orange liquid won't be enough to get you through this lot! *Summer Games* is made up of eight gruelling events; pole vault, diving, 4 x 400 metre relay, gymnastics, 100 metre dash, freestyle swimming relay, 100 metre freestyle and skeet shooting.

Precise joystick control is necessary to get over the bar – Spectrum screen



The Spectrum version retains great playability even through the different control styles required in each, simply constructed event. Visuals are good, with certain events sporting some well animated graphics – track running, diving, gymnastics and the pole vault for example – although the last two use rather crude, single colour pictures. Compared to *Winter Games*, use of colour is restricted although the majority of screens are attractive.

The Amstrad version fares better with its attractive use of colour, and small, but beautifully formed, well animated graphics. Sound plays a large part, featuring jingles on selected events, the world-records screen and the opening ceremony. This improved presentation makes for a better game while retaining the all-important challenge.

The main attraction of sport simulations is the generation of competition between players, both Spectrum and Amstrad versions of *Summer Games* achieve this – proving almost as enjoyable as the original Commodore 64/128 game.

SPECTRUM:
OVERALL 72%
AMSTRAD: OVERALL 74%

VERSION UPDATE

NIGHT RAIDER
Gremlin Graphics

Spectrum 48/128: Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £12.99

FIRST reviewed on the Atari ST in TGM**009** (70%), this World War II arcade simulator has now fought its way to the Spectrum. The basic gameplay remains the same, with you controlling three crew members in a Gruman Avenger's cockpit.

Based on the real-life aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*, the Avenger is sent to sink the *Bismarck* with a torpedo, fighting through enemy fighters and flak. At the same time, however, you must protect the *Ark Royal* from German bombers, mine fields, E-boats and U-boats.

At the start you are offered a choice of missions; quite often several flights have to be completed before you are allowed a crack at the battle cruiser. And on long missions the Avenger has to return to the *Ark Royal* for refuelling and re-arming.

Your responsibilities are shown by four different views: a straight-ahead pilot's view with machine-gun cursor, engineer's panel, navigator's map and rear gunner. An indicator in the corner of each screen shows when your attention is needed elsewhere.

Most of the screens are self-explanatory, but the engineer's is one of the most important, requiring correct control setting for take-off and landing.

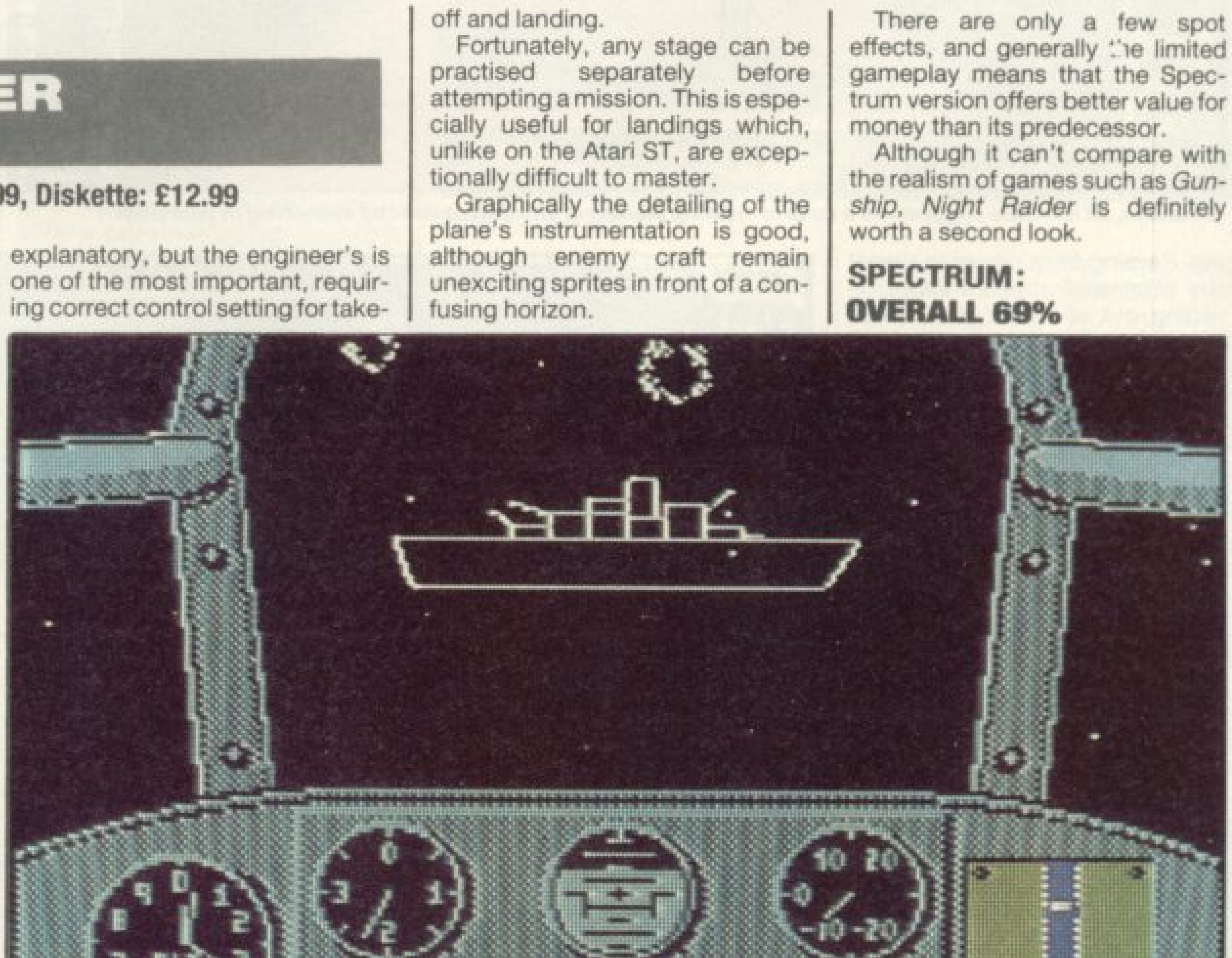
Fortunately, any stage can be practised separately before attempting a mission. This is especially useful for landings which, unlike on the Atari ST, are exceptionally difficult to master.

Graphically the detailing of the plane's instrumentation is good, although enemy craft remain unexciting sprites in front of a confusing horizon.

There are only a few spot effects, and generally the limited gameplay means that the Spectrum version offers better value for money than its predecessor.

Although it can't compare with the realism of games such as *Gunship*, *Night Raider* is definitely worth a second look.

SPECTRUM:
OVERALL 69%



The Bismark and her crew are about to experience Davey Jones' locker first hand – if your torpedo hits home

ROAD HOGS

STREET SPORTS SOCCER

US Gold/Epyx

Epyx's *Street Sports* series began with ... *Baseball* on the Commodore 64 (before TGM's time), and now continues with ... *Soccer*, with ... *Basketball* to follow. All these games reject the usual idea of controlling fully professional teams competing in a capacity-filled stadium – instead, a group of local kids play a casual game in their neighbourhood.

It's real street cred time. Both players must choose three teammates from the nine available, Who will you choose? Radar's the most dextrous player, but is a little slow? Vic, an ace goalkeeper but apt to let the occasional easy one through? Or perhaps Dana, whose nervous attacking play is made up for by her defensive skills?

From Bojo to Butch, the choice is yours. But remember that one of will have to go in goal. If the decision's too much for you, the computer can randomly select a team for you, or a pair of predefined teams can be used from a selection of five.

The spirit of an energetic soccer game in an American neighborhood is adequately generated by brash colours (on the Commodore) and comical style on the suburban scrolling pitch. Unfortunately, the players in the game do *not* fit the game's style with their standard shirts and shorts. Aren't these kids fresh off the streets?

Matches are played in two ways – timed over a period between two and 45 minutes, five penalty rounds played if the score is level at full-time. Alternatively, a target score can be set, from five goals to 20, the winning team being the first to achieve the amount. And there are three skill levels.

I pass

Joystick direction in combination with fire controls kicks. Dribbling is automatic. Should you get into an awkward situation, any non-forward direction and fire passes to your other striker/defender. The characters' clothes change colour to show who you're currently controlling. In your goal area, control can be switched between goalkeeper and your leading forward.

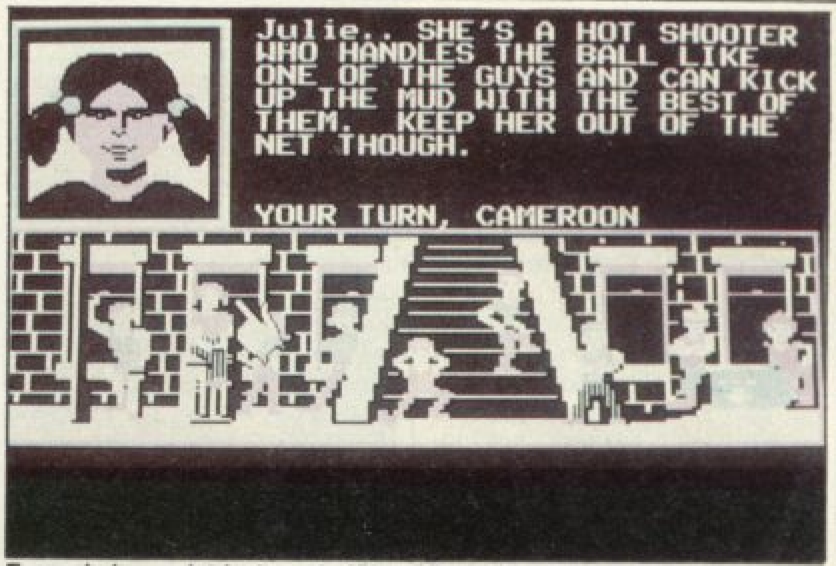
The ball can be captured by blocking as it's passed, or by guiding one of your players between the ball and opponent's feet. Any fouls and the opposing team gets a penalty shot at goal.

Playing against the computer – and ignoring the poorly defined ball – is a lively affair, the handful of players sprinting around nicely. But regardless of the situation, all characters run at the same speed, so that if an attacking opponent is ahead of your strikers, you have no option but to switch to the keeper, as it is impossible to catch up. It marrs the game seriously.

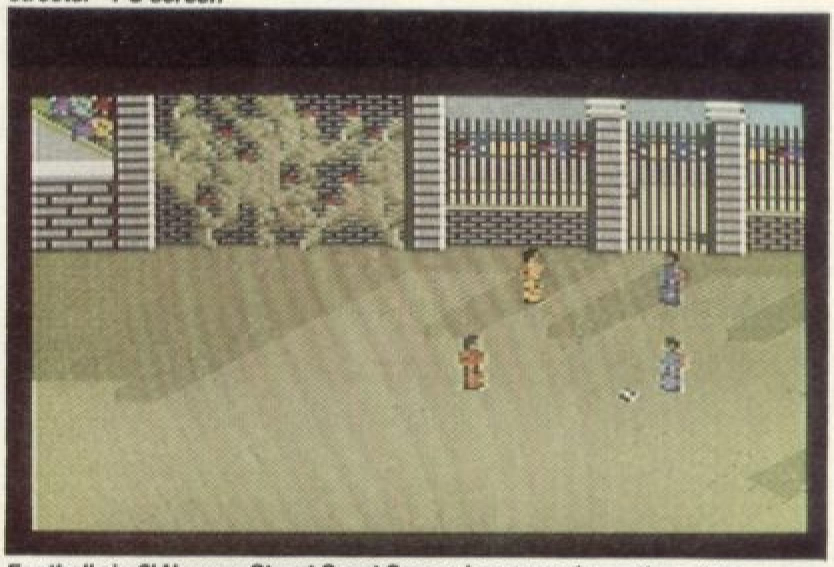
PC
Diskette: £19.99

The PC game is instantly offputting by the limitations of the CGA four-colour mode graphics, the colour freedom of the EGA card ignored. The pitch is black, where blue would have been a better choice, and players are blue and pink. Scrolling is substandard, for the PC's speed, and gaudy sprite designs don't help appearances. Playability is hindered by the same player speed problem as the Commodore version.

OVERALL 42%



Team choice: an intricate part of Street Sport Soccer, *'cos it's tough on the streets! – PC screen*



Football sim?! No way, Street Sport Soccer *is aggressive action all the way – Commodore screen*

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

A two-player game provides a deal of fun and friendly competition, but the equal-speed footballers restrict play. A more balanced control system would have made Street Sports Soccer **a highly enjoyable football game.**

OVERALL 63%

> **"Playing the computer is a lively affair, but hindered by the speed problem"**

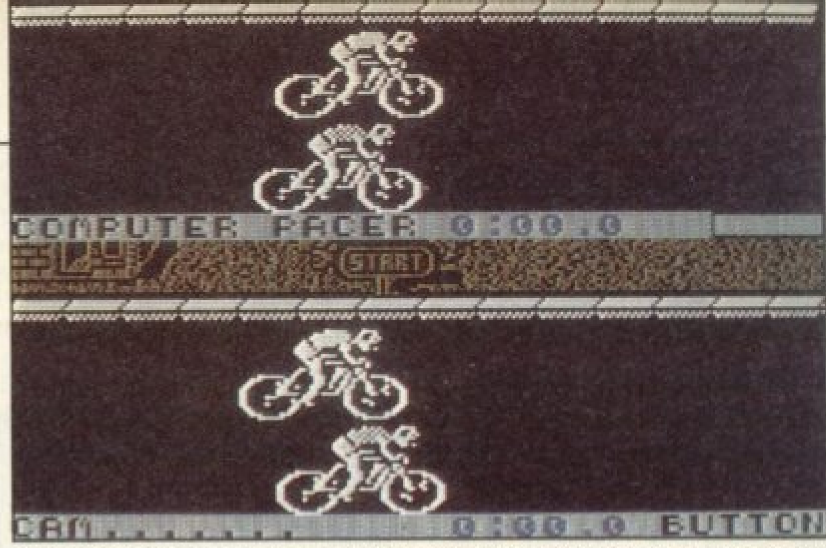
A touch of the Football Managers *here as you decide who's gonna play on your side – Commodore screen*



VERSION UPDATE

SUMMER GAMES II
Epyx

Spectrum 48/128: Cassette £14.99, Diskette: £17.99
Amstrad CPC: Cassette £14.99, Diskette: £24.99

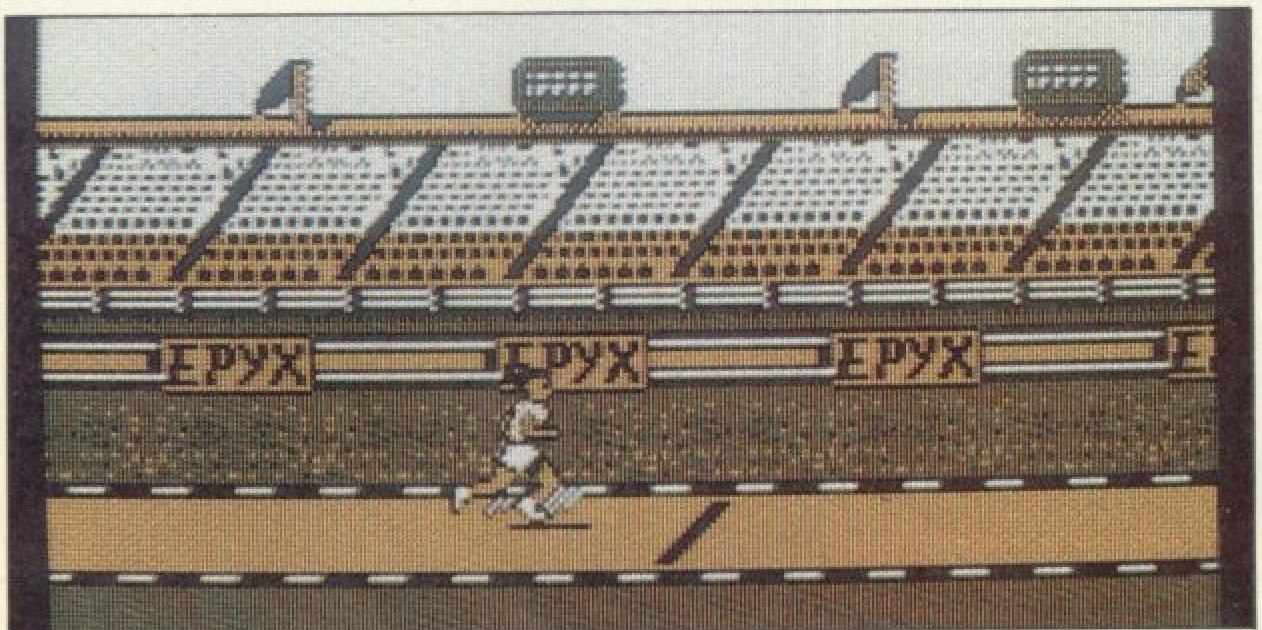


Summer Gamesrecycled – control is awkward but the thrill of the race is still present – Spectrum screen

SUMMER GAMES II covers a further eight events, simulating not only the more familiar sports such as the javelin, high and triple jump but also those perhaps less well known; rowing, kayaking, fencing, cycling and equestrian.

Variety is offered in each event proving more a test of timing with the joystick than physical punishment. On both machines, the difficulty of events ranges from simple to very tough. The difficulty often stemming not through the profusion of joystick movements to perform but the lack of response. Some playability has been lost as a result, especially in the equestrian, with its stubborn horse, and the unresponsive, awkward control in the Cycling.

Learning the moves is difficult and play can prove inconsistent. Nevertheless, most events are problem free, entertaining and place a different set of demands on the player than those encountered in *Summer Games*.



The phrase goes 'look before you leap' – perhaps in this context it should be 'luck' – Amstrad screen

Graphically, this sequel makes much the same use of the host machine as the prequel but features better animation. The Spectrum version is largely monochrome but makes good use of colour where it can.

The Amstrad game is let down through lack of colour, those used are odd – ever seen an orange horse before? Scrolling however, is smooth and detail is generally better than in *Summer Games*.

In the area of sonic entertainment, the Spectrum version wins with short tunes (although sometimes ill-matched) played before each event – the Amstrad *Summer Games II* offers only limited spot effects.

Multiload is present but nevertheless the competitive element and playability have been retained – and that's what matters most.

SPECTRUM: OVERALL 75%
AMSTRAD: OVERALL 73%

VERSION UPDATE

QUADRALIEN
Logotron

Amiga: Diskette: £19.95

XOR was a very good puzzle game, largely because of the simplicity of its basic components. *Quadralien* (Atari ST 71% TGM **009**) – from the same programmers – is substantially more complex and less likely to appeal to the casual game player looking for an easy blast.

You supervise six droids in a effort to prevent an orbital nuclear plant melting down. In the process destruction of the Quadralien Mother, whose minion hordes infest the plant, is desirable. Besides the Quadralien infection, the nuclear plant is also massively contaminated by radioactivity.

To succeed you must progress through all four levels. Three require codes given only once sufficient points have been scored. Each level – except the final one – is composed of six chambers tackled in any order with any combination of two of the six droids – each has different characteristics.

On the first level simply find and collect all the radioactivity, while keeping the reactor cool by pushing barrels of coolant down chutes. On most chambers lasers may be used to blast objects which get in the way, others, however, won't allow this. On later levels there are explosive charges, magnetic tracks, earthing-box traps, lighting points and aggressive aliens.

The Amiga version has richer sound effects and background music than the ST, plus some additional graphic effects on the control panel, but is handicapped by the 'stepped' way it flicks between screens. This effect may be technically far superior to the simple switch between screens (as on the ST), but is irritating to watch every time you move off screen. All in all a long-term challenge which fortunately incorporates a save/load option.

AMIGA OVERALL 64%



Six robots are yours to command as you strive to prevent a meltdown



Sargeant Steel plays rough with rookies – but it's for their own good!

VERSION UPDATE

NINETEEN PART 1: BOOT CAMP
Cascade

Spectrum: Cassette £9.95, Diskette: £14.95

THE GAME of the hit record rolls on with the Spectrum version following its Commodore predecessor (62%) a month later. We got a picture in last month, but not a Spectrum review.

Vietnam is where you're going, but first the training camp. Four appropriately tough stages consisting of eight substages, fail to complete one substage and you're on to the next multiloaded event.

The assault course, with brick walls, monkey bars and ditches, is surprisingly sedate, not a hint of frantic joystick-waggling. Graphically this is good, with the soldier's gasping for breath beautifully animated, unfortunately it's also very tough. Timing the jumps and so forth is exceptionally picky, conveying little of the atmosphere of the event.

Far more effective is the second stage shooting range. Jeep training, the third stage, is graphically nice, but suffers from the jeep obscuring much of the course ahead – frustrating. The last training session is with Sergeant Steele for unarmed combat, a rather sluggish beat-'em-up.

Undoubtedly the best section of *Nineteen* is its most original part – the shooting range. Other events lack originality, but presentation and playability is significantly improved from the Commodore, making it well worth a look.

SPECTRUM 48/128: OVERALL 73%

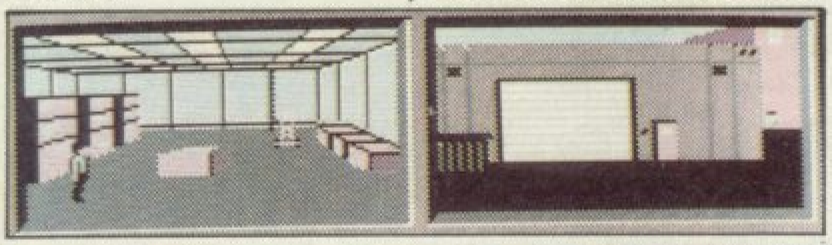
VERSION UPDATE

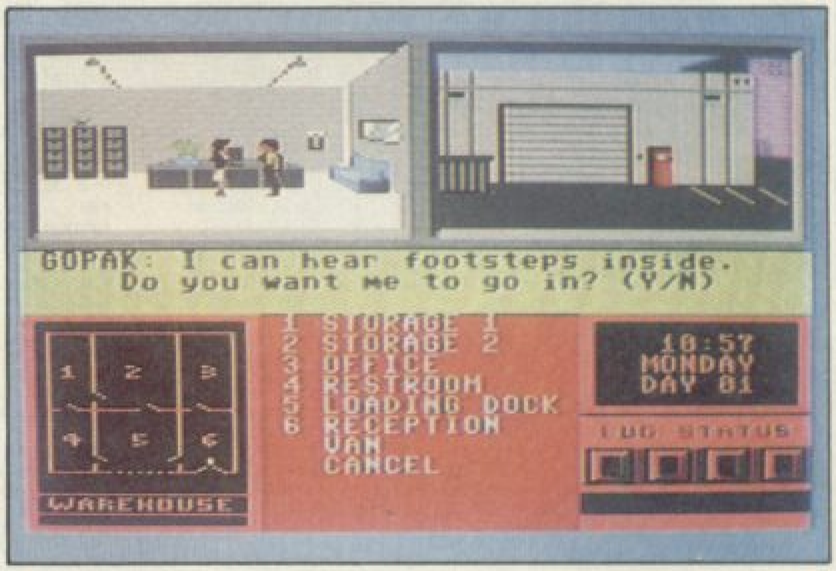
LA CRACKDOWN
Epyx

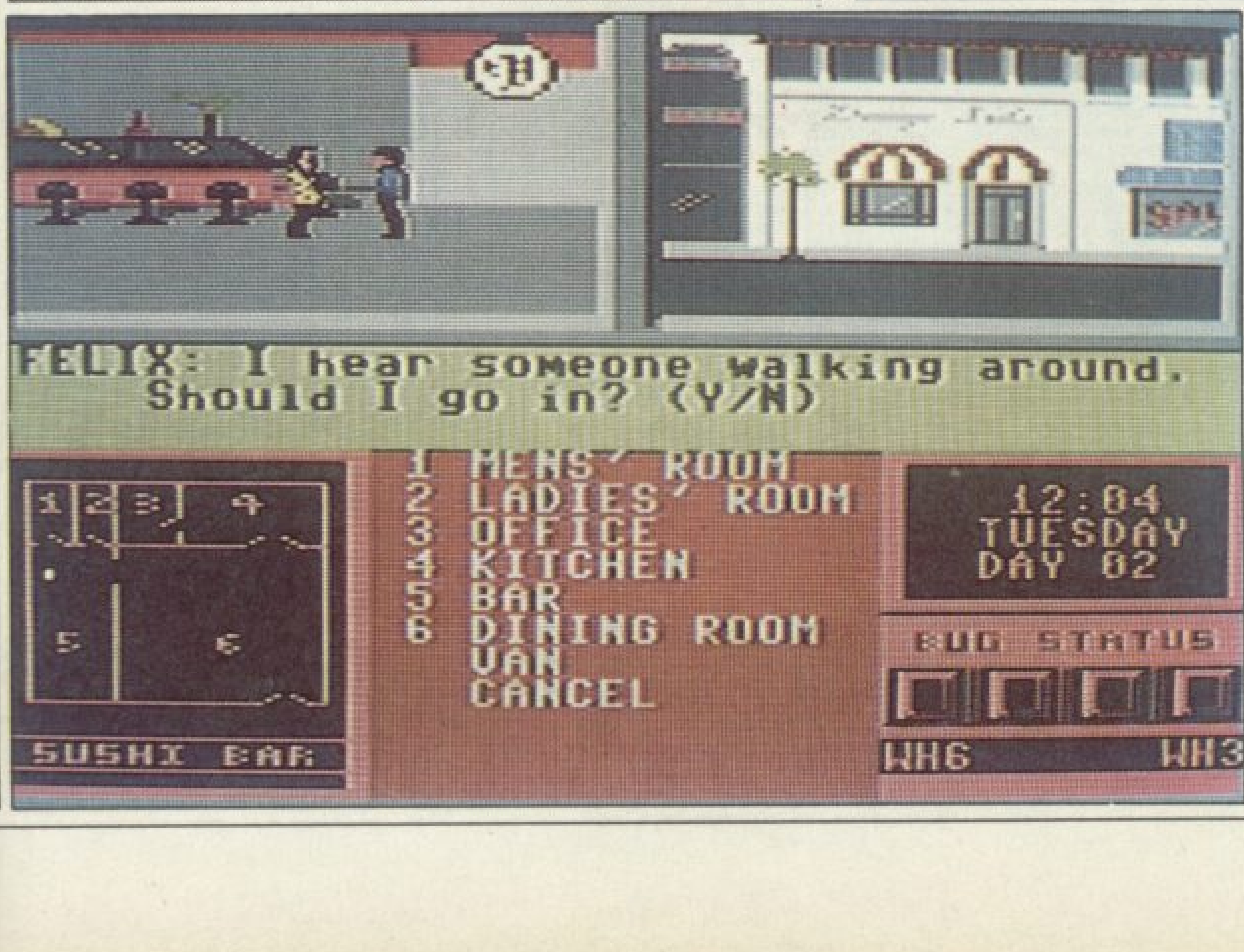
Commodore 64/128: Diskette: £14.99

THIRD in Epyx's *Masterclass* series features illegal drugs trafficking.

The synthetic drug, Samadhi has been smuggled from Hong Kong to be pushed on the streets







As long as your requests remain reasonable, your rookie should do as he's told

of LA. It's up to you to stake out the shipping company responsible and gather sufficient evidence to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Using an on-screen menu you control a rookie cop to plant bugs, search warehouses, fight thugs and interview suspects. However, he has a mind of his own and may refuse to do your bidding or indeed decide to quit should you order him to do anything unreasonable.

The Commodore game plays similarly to the PC version (reviewed TGM **010** 68%), although sound and graphics are slightly improved. Disk-access time is minimal, but unfortunately the program causes the drive to hammer something terrible when accessing. In fact the worry of the damage it may be causing to the heads outweighs the desire to play the game. It's not worth the risk.

COMMODORE 64/128: OVERALL 48%

TRYBRIDGE SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION

TITLE	SPECTRUM CASS	SPECTRUM DISC	CBM 64 CASS	CBM 64 DISC	AMSTRAD CASS	AMSTRAD DISC
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR VOL	–	–	–	14.25	–	–
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I O	–	–	6.25	9.95	–	–
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TRILLION BYTE TRIPS

Sex, drugs, war and mirrored sunglasses. Classic cyberpunk themes are all revealed in the fist of TGM's Trillion Byte Trip book reviews. Over the page, Stuart Wynne segues into another trip altogether



Cooking on a moonlit wagon pulled by a mad horse David Mingolla 'felt dread. But that was just fancy. He realised that his first intuition had embodied the true essence of terror, the comprehension that everything we dread is simply a reminder of insignificance, one we assign a supernatural valence in order to boost our morale.'

And as with mysterious happenings in the dead of night so with foreign wars lost. America's longest war was also the only one it lost and that failure continues to haunt even now. Not even the long delayed burial of the Vietnam War's Unknown Soldier has laid to rest all the ghosts. Just ask wouldbe Vice-President Senator Dan Quayle, Oliver *Platoon* Stone or the mothers of those declared Missing In Action there.

Vietnam's unworldly resonance and dark magic provide much of the power of two new novels dealing with conflict in Central America. Undoubtedly the most powerful and impressive of these is **David Shepard**'s *Life During Wartime* (£10.95, Grafton Books).

This is a heavily praised story set in some neo-cyberpunk near-future where America has committed its regular forces to a conflict in Central America. The central character is David Mingolla, an artillery man with latent psi powers which he has been suppressing to avoid service in the ominous PsiCorps.

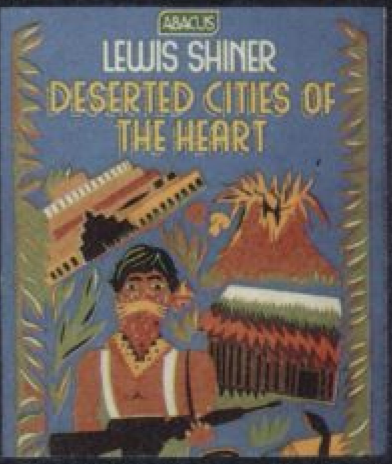
Mingolla's story begins conventionally enough, with next generation gunships and fighters flying over Free Occupied Guatemala. Thereafter the book takes a distinct turn toward the surreal, with helicopter pilots sealed in impenetrable black helmets claiming powers of prophesy.

Mingolla and his friends react badly to this. Intensely superstitious, they follow elaborate rituals as if a bullet must first be wrapped in a spell to kill them – rather than simply suffer a lucky ricochet. In this the American soldiers are becoming like the Central Americans; 'trapped between the poles of magic and reason, their lives governed by the politics of the ultrareal, their spirits ruled by myths and legends'.

As the novel continues, surreal events swirl out of the jungle with an eery, hallucinogenic quality. A fallen helicopter contains an artificially intelligent computer claiming to be God, a drug-crazed group of AWOL soldiers worship beams of light penetrating the jungle canopy, and Mingolla engages in some pyrotechnical psi battles.

Moving from impressive, broad canvas portraits of a sprawling battle to the fragile, almost intangible currents of feeling in a love affair, Shepard's sharp eye for observation, and rich prose, never fail to convince.

The novel's themes of Sex-as-God, violence and the nature of reality flow effortlessly through a superb war story/supernatural thriller/love story. Such improbable concepts as a global conspiracy and massive use of psi are merged to produce a disorientating insight into contemporary life, unreal and yet more convincing for that. The most enjoyable and stimulating book of the year, decade, etc . . .



Lewis Shiner, like Richard Shepard, is a former rock musician who has chosen to write on Central America for his second novel. Unlike Shepard he's very much a part of the Cyberpunk movement with his first novel – *Frontera* – dedicated to William Gibson among others.

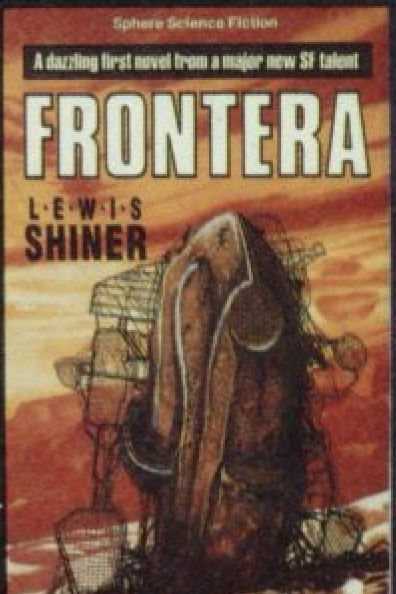
It's a surprise, therefore, to find that *Deserted Cities Of The Heart* (£3.99, Abacus) is set in the past, 1986 to be precise. To some certain extent its post-Cyberpunk, or pre-Cyberpunk, one of the characters disparages the ultimate symbol trappings of Cyberpunk – mirrored sunglasses – as flakey. Another argues it's a lie; 'I think you're kidding yourself. People aren't going to tear down all their beautiful ranch-style homes and start living in greenhouses. Things are just going to go on the the way they always have.'

The conflict between the oppressive status quo, and a more uncertain revolutionary future struggling to be born, underly the war between the Mexican Army and communist guerillas.

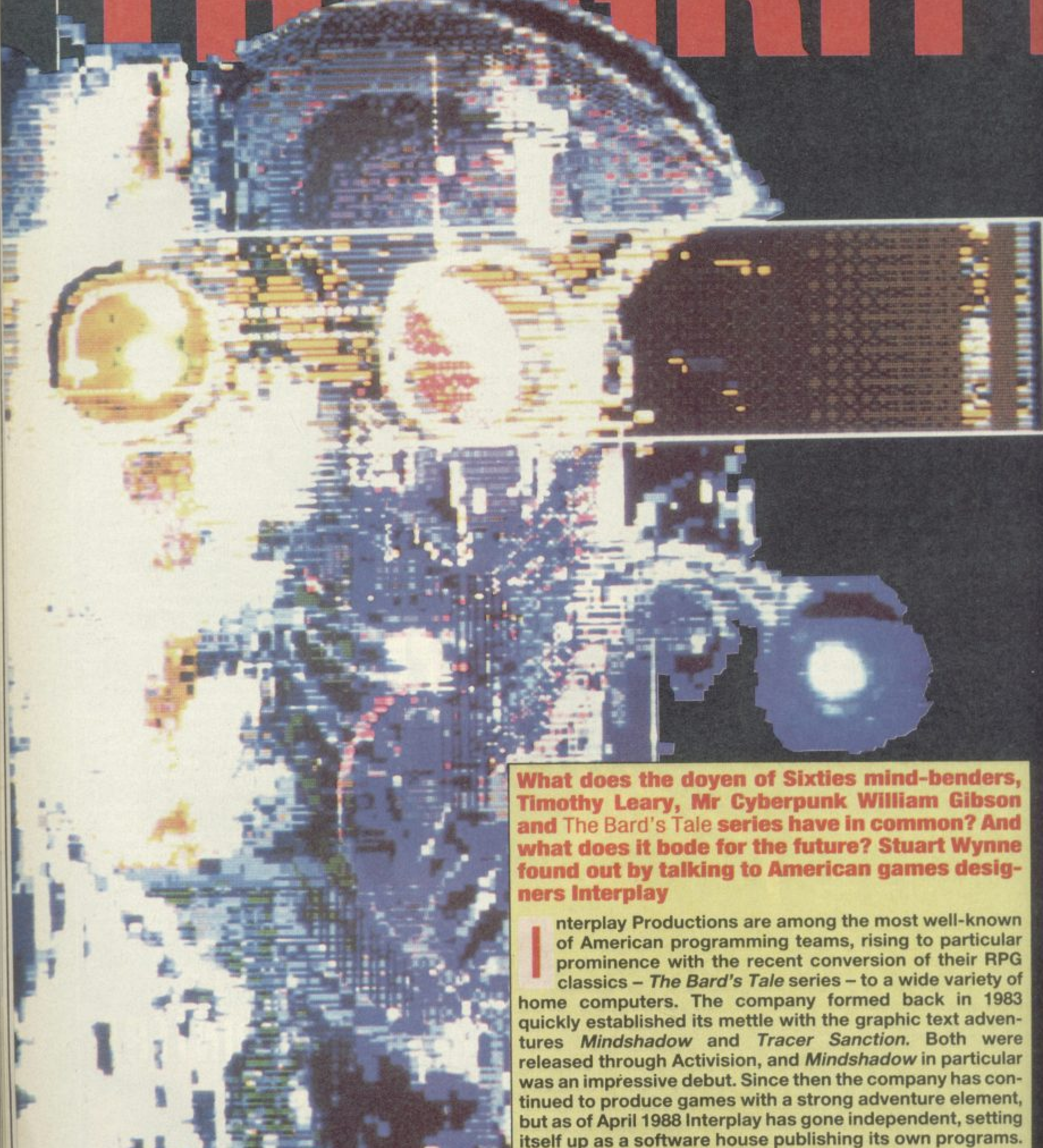
The novel starts with a *Rolling Stones* reporter looking for an interview with a guerilla leader. Later it moves on to encompass an anthropologist, his sister-in-law and their quest to find her husband before closing these subplots together in a mystical climax.

The husband is, in fact, a former rock guitarist who has disappeared in the countryside to live with Mayan tribes people. His relationship with them, and dangerous experimentation with 'magic mushrooms', provides an interesting insight into Central American culture, counterbalancing the excellent characterisation of normal Americans caught up in war, and some superbly drawn echoes of Vietnam.

Polished with some intensive research, such as why Belgium FAL rifles are so popular with communist revolutionaries, this is an excellent story. Like *Life During Wartime*, it encompasses a powerful love story and war story, while hinting at yet more serious things. A serious, very sensual novel with a thriller's pace.



THE GRIT



What does the doyen of Sixties mind-benders, Timothy Leary, Mr Cyberpunk William Gibson and The Bard's Tale **series have in common? And what does it bode for the future? Stuart Wynne found out by talking to American games designers Interplay**

Interplay Productions are among the most well-known of American programming teams, rising to particular prominence with the recent conversion of their RPG classics – *The Bard's Tale* series – to a wide variety of home computers. The company formed back in 1983 quickly established its mettle with the graphic text adventures *Mindshadow* and *Tracer Sanction.* Both were released through Activision, and *Mindshadow* in particular was an impressive debut. Since then the company has continued to produce games with a strong adventure element, but as of April 1988 Interplay has gone independent, setting itself up as a software house publishing its own programs. To find out why, and how it became involved with Cyberpunk and LSD guru Timothy Leary, I talked via TGM's trans-Atlantic interface to Brian Fargo, the Producer/Director of all Interplay's products.

Y FUTURE

Interplay's decision to go independent has apparently much to do with the type of games it produces. A relatively small company it employs designers, programmers and artists on projects which can literally take years to develop. *Wasteland* (see page 75) took no less than two years, with five people on it full-time, and eleven people doing support programming.

Obviously such extensive work takes a lot of money. The royalties received from selling to a software house are markedly less than selling it yourself. Moreover Interplay want to develop a higher profile for themselves, with a reputation for consistent, quality products.

Unfortunately their most famous title – *The Bard's Tale* – as well as newer *Wasteland*, are both the property of Electronic Arts, so whether or not there are sequels is up to them. And Interplay may, in any case, choose not to write them.

To establish their name as an independent software house, Interplay have thus been forced to produce two, totally new games. One of them is *Battle Chess*, the company's first original Amiga program, with four Mbytes of animation and 400K of digitised sound. The other is *Neuromancer*, the computer game of Cyberpunk's most acclaimed novel, written by the man who almost singlehandedly created the genre – William Gibson.

Cracked ice

Set in 21st century Japan, the computer game, like the book, foresees the world dominated by a vast computer network. Interacting with these networks is done by Cyberspace, a *Tron*-like alternative reality, representing transactions by visual symbols, rather than text and code.

Cyberspace hackers able to crack the ICE protecting corporate databases are both feared and prized. *Neuromancer*'s central character, Case, is one such cowboy, and he begins the computer game scouring the streets of Japan for better equipment.

The scenario, completely unlike the novel, finds Case attempting to discover who is flatlining – killing – his hacker friends. To do this he must search for advanced equipment and secret information so as to gain more skill at melting ICE systems.

Interplay freely admitted that little of the original work's plot remained, but were enthusiastic about their own version. Rather than simply converting the book's storyline into a roleplaying adventure, they felt they'd 'captured the essence of the world, the characters, the matrix . . . All the people are there, their personalities are the same and there's a mission that's slightly similar.'



The body bank: exchange your non-vitals for currency

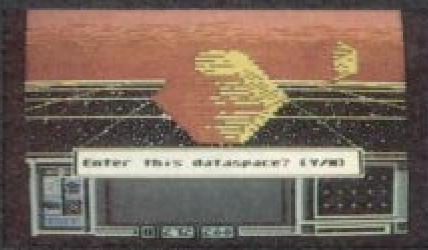
Entirely new structure

In addition the computer game very cleverly uses, wherever possible, direct quotations from the novel to describe places such as Ratz's bar.

When questioned about how Interplay felt tackling the C64 version of a book involving state-of-the-art, 21st century computer graphics, they pointed to this use of text to create the appropriate atmosphere. Moreover the actual battlegrounds of Cyberspace were never described that precisely, so Interplay felt themselves free to follow their own instincts as to how it should look.

More generally it was apparent from the look of *Neuromancer* screenshots that the game had a totally different gamestyle from *The Bard's Tale*/*Wasteland* approach. Interplay acknowledged this, saying they'd produced an entirely new structure which was very difficult to categorise. For example, whereas combat was central to the earlier games, the new one has very little except in relation to confronting ICE and AI computers in Cyberspace. And as this takes place in Cyberspace it bears no resemblance whatsoever to 'hackin' and 'slayin'' with the *Bard*.

Instead Interplay felt 'that technology and knowledge become your weapons in this [Cyberpunk] world'. One of the things they were most proud of in the new system was the ability to have conversations with NPC's (Non Player Characters). 'The interface is unique and provides for having very interesting conversations



Tron*-like Cyberspace: there lurks Dataspace*

with a lot of humour and feel.' Nevertheless the company refused to label the system a substantial advance on their former style, preferring simply to call it 'different'.

Leary and Neuromancer

Interplay first became interested in Gibson's work when Timothy Leary, a friend of Brian Fargo, showed him *Neuromancer*. Leary had acquired the rights to a game version from the movie producers and originally intended to do the game with Electronic Arts. These plans fell through however, as did a subsequent attempt with Activision. During this time Brian Fargo and Troy Miles had started a design that they felt would capture the feel of the Cyberpunk genre. '*Max Headroom* was a favourite show of ours as well as *Blade Runner*.'

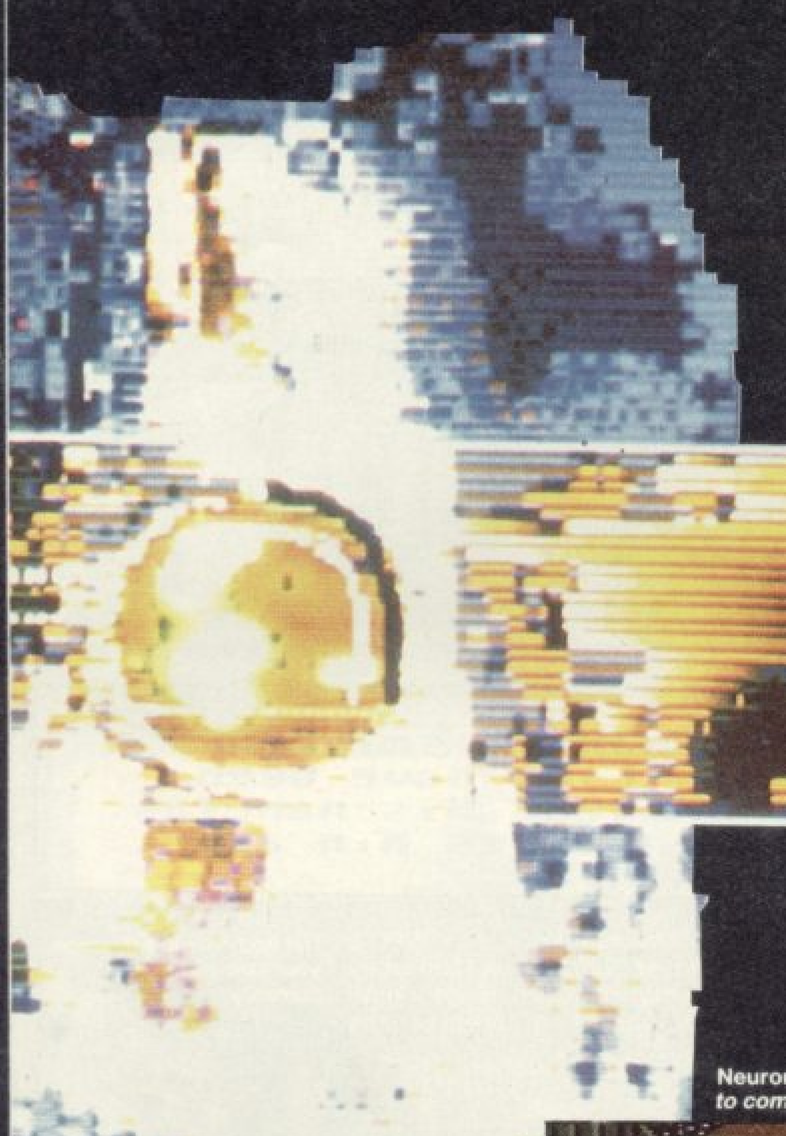
When Activision dropped the project, Interplay asked them for the rights. Getting Activision, the movie producers and Timothy Leary to agree on a deal was a little tricky.

"They'd 'captured the essence of the world, the characters, the matrix . . . "

PRESS ANY KEY

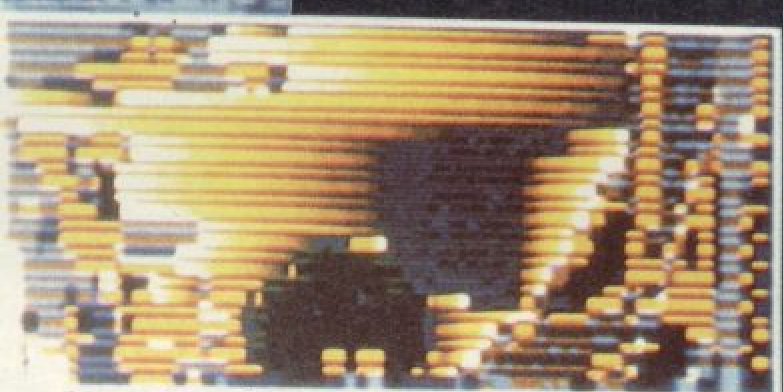
Once completed, however, it proved very easy to adapt their game design to *Neuromancer* 'considering [Interplay's] feel for Cyberpunk'.

One of principal players in the deal, Timothy Leary, is of course famous, perhaps infamous, for his Sixties advice to American college students 'turn on, tune in, drop out'. At the time LSD had yet to be banned and as a psychedelic, non-addictive mind-altering drug, was seriously considered to offer 'trips' comparable to the religious experiences claimed for great saints.



Computer-excited

The horrors of heroin and cocaine addiction together with several LSD-related murders in the late Sixties have since insured a radical change in attitudes toward LSD. Leary himself always advocated calm, peaceful surroundings for taking the drug which can, in a depressed state of mind, make nightmares appear real. Leary now emphasises the need for training, such as shamans undertake before taking 'magic mushrooms'. Only recently denied entry into the UK, Leary remains controversial, but as Interplay pointed out, less so than 20 years ago. Nowadays 'he's more into computers than anything, and he's real excited about what's happening'.



"We are the computer hackers of the future"

Besides introducing Interplay to William Gibson, for the initial design sessions, Leary also introduced them to the cult, American punk group DEVO (current release: *Total Devo* on Enigma records). Getting them to produce a soundtrack was surprisingly easy: 'DEVO are the ultimate cyberpunks, they love [Neuromancer]. They are fans of Gibson, fans of the book and their sound has a cyberpunk sound, so when they found out they could do it they jumped at the chance.'

Do Interplay consider themselves Cyberpunks?''Yes, of course! We are the computer hackers of the future. In fact the programmer, Troy Miles's nickname is Modern Miles . . . We thought Gibson's vision of the future was very close to home . . . we see the notion of Cyberspace as something that could happen, visual interfaces are far more effective than any typed ones . . . the fact of the future being gritty is right on. People assimilate technology quite rapidly already.'

Neuromancer *title screen: giving a taste of what's to come*



Neuromancing

Neuromancer the computer game may be assimilated from October for £14.95 on two, absolutely crammed-full Commodore disks, and December for £24.95 on the PC. Distribution in Europe and UK remains in the capable hands of Electronic Arts, whose Leslie Mansford was mega-snazz in setting up this interview.

For the future Interplay have in development a 'Project X' containing many advances over *Bard's III* but designed to appeal to the same audience. Sequels to *Neuromancer* based on Gibson's *Count Zero* and *Mona Lisa Overdrive* depend on reaction to the current release.

Nevertheless Interplay have been talking a lot about *Count Zero* and already have many improvements in mind for it – should the game be produced. As for the 16-bit market *Battle Chess* is an incredibly impressive debut on the Amiga, combining superb animation with *Monty Python*-type humour. If gameplay matches presentation, Interplay look set for a very bright future indeed in the 16-bit market as well as the 8-bit.

As for the future of this Cyberpunk series, transatlantic communications permitting, I hope to have an interview with William Gibson himself, and even that much-delayed look at *RoboCop*, that multi-media and extremely violent Cyberpunk entertainment.

Superb animation coupled with Monty Python-type humour makes this a game of Chess with a difference – Amiga



ROB STEEL'S GETTING ADVENTUROUS

STEEL SHAVINGS

It had to happen I suppose, not one adventure game has come my way for review this month. Someone pass the Neurofen! While I swallow these, to prevent you staring at two appealing, but nonetheless boring, pages of white, I thought I'd tell of what delights we have to look forward to from Infocom/Mediagenic. **Welcome to the adventure preview section – plus another chance to get the feel of Steel's tips!.**

SHOGUN

RELEASE DATES: Atari ST and Amiga, Spring 1989, Commodore 64/128, June/July of the same year – Prices to be announced

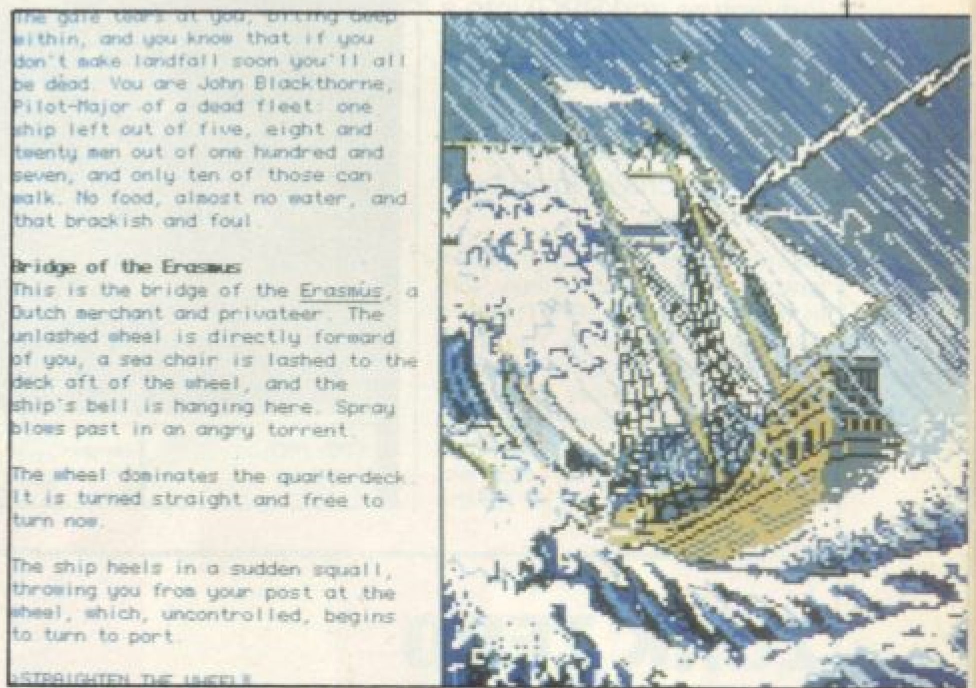
Journey back to the 16th century and imagine yourself as a sea pilot on an uncharted route to the Japans. *Shogun* places you in this situation as the hero John Blackthorne, from James Clavell's best-selling novel.

You finally reach land to find yourself caught up in a political power struggle between two Japanese regents, both aspiring to be Shogun. As you attempt to adapt to the alien culture you befriend one of the regents and fall in love with his translator, Mariko.

Dave Lebling, author of *Sorcerer*, *Spellbreaker* and *Lurking Horror*, collaborated with Clavell to write the game. He also incorporates much of his own creative style and rich prose.

Shogun, unlike previous Infocom adventures, is more concerned with getting Blackthorne to think and make decisions about situations rather than solving complicated puzzles.

Its graphics mimic a traditional 16th century Japanese style and are purported to be the most outstanding that Infocom have created to date. They are used to enhance the story and reward you for handling situations successfully – whether it be matching wits with tyrannical Japanese aristocrats or fighting off Ninja attacks.



The gale tears at you – make it to land soon or your crew dies – ST screen

BATTLETECH: THE CRESCENT HAWK'S INCEPTION

RELEASE DATES: PC later this year, Commodore 64/128 early in 1989 – Prices to be announced

This may not strictly be an adventure, but when you're struggling for product to look at, the rules sometimes get bent a little. From the 16th century let us travel forward to the 31st and Chara IV – a water processing plant.

Whilst training to operate the lethal Battlemechs (massive combat robots) you, as Jason Youngblood, suddenly find yourself defending the planet against an alien invasion. You learn that your father led a crack squadron to meet the enemy but neither he nor any of his men returned. Frightened, yet brave and determined, you swear revenge against the deadly Kurita warriors.

To produce this state-of-the-art roleplaying adventure, Infocom joined forces with **Westwood Associates** (acclaimed RPG designers from Las Vegas).

As well as being mainly about combat and building characteristics, you may at any time, hone your skills by entering the arena, where you can either control the fighting yourself or use the computer to fight for you.

Each battle challenge is more deadly than the last, and as you get closer to your goal, so the frequency of confrontations increases – hopefully along with your skill level.

Battletech includes features typical to standard role-playing games plus some unique innovations; spectacularly animated graphics, emotive responses from characters and the option to zoom in on particular action sequences.

A deviation for Infocom maybe – but an interesting one.



Using your Battletech robot, defend the planet in your search for Daddy – ST screen

PRESS ANY KEY

JOURNEY

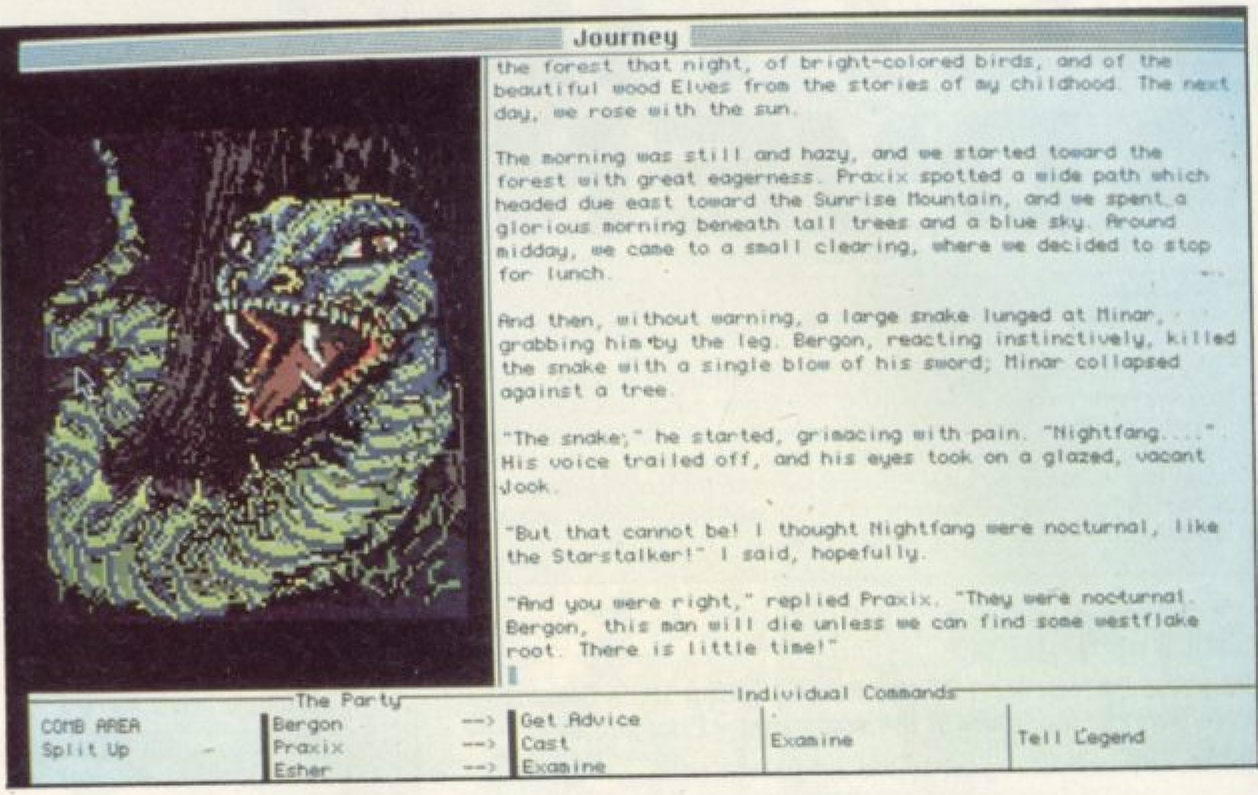
RELEASE DATES: PC later this year, Atari ST and Amiga early 1989 and Commodore 64/128 in the spring/summer of 1989 – Prices to be announced

Co-author of the *Zork Trilogy*, **Marc Blank**, has created a new type of computer storytelling system; incorporating a classic fantasy theme and melding two game-types (adventure and RPG) into a novel form of its own. **RolePlay Chronicles** draw from the best games which include both elegantly rich prose and challenging puzzles.

Journey takes you to a graphical land of mesmerising fantasy, told in the tradition of JRR Tolkien's *The Lord Of The Rings*. You share your magical adventures with Tag, Praxix, Bergon, Esher and Minar as they solve puzzles, overcome obstacles and explore unknown lands. Each character can act independently (sometimes for the good of the quest – sometimes not!).

Your task is to help them decide where to go and what to do. You have the power and therefore must be combat strategist, physician, and character judge while pursuing the defeat of evil infesting the land.

Plunge yourself into a graphically illustrated world of dwarves, elves, nymphs and wizards in Journey– ST



ZORK ZERO

RELEASE DATES: Atari ST and Amiga early 1989, Commodore 64/128 spring 1989 – Prices to be announced

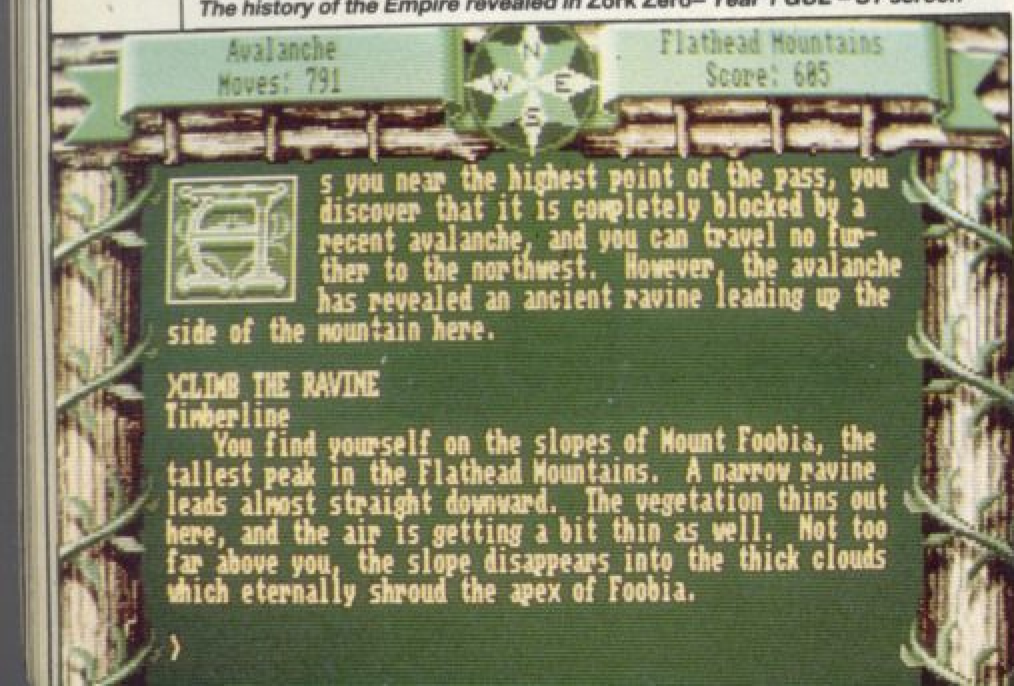
We all know and love the *Zork Trilogy* (including *Beyond Zork* there are actually four parts to the series), but it appears that Infocom have gone as far forward with the subject as possible. Knowing a successful subject when they see one, they aim to fill their coffers by going back in time to 'the early years' and examining the Great Underground Empire's history.

Steve Meretzky, author of the famed *Leather Goddesses Of Phobos*, is the man who takes you back to the beginning – adding his own unique brand of humour to *Zork Zero*.

This prequel explores the collapse of the GUE, boasting more than 200 locations and as many puzzles as the *Zork Trilogy* combined. It also features the first graphical puzzles to appear in an Infocom title.

Zork Zero takes you to the last days of the empire. The evil magician, Megaboz has cast a spell to destroy the ruling Flathead family and threatened the very kingdom. You are one of the many fortune hunters trying to claim a reward by stemming his curse – although you do hold a family secret which could just give you the edge.

The history of the Empire revealed in Zork Zero– Year 1 GUE – ST screen



STEEL TIPS

Stuck in a tree? Up to your waist in gooey slime? Short of a match or piece of string? Pissed off and about to turn off the computer? Well write to me, folks. Help you? Not likely, but I can always pass on your plea via this column and someone out there might condescend to help. Meanwhile, here are some tips I prepared earlier . . .

Robin Of Sherwood
Adventure International

From the start; Stand on the prisoners, grab the guard's leg and strangle him when he falls.

Search him and take his sword. Undo the bolt and open the grate, go out and through the door to the courtyard. Climb the battlements, go through the door and head right, go through the window.

Enter the waterfall and collect the weapons, go south, pick up the quarterstaff and fight little John to free him from the spell. Drop the staff.

Go to the holly tree, climb and examine it to get the touchstone. Go to the outlaws camp and type LOOK. Go to Nottingham and enter the bow and arrow contest.

Zork I
Infocom

To speed up the whole game; kill the thief first

Seabase Delta
Firebird

Enter 104 and 199 to fire the small missile. Swim to get the plank which acts as a lever

Lords Of Time
Level Nine/Mandarin

To get the icicle – shout! Drop something cold to get across the lake. Kneel, then pray to gain a winged gift

Beyond Zork
Infocom

In the cellar, look at the amulet through the wine bottle to get a spell that gives you 99% strength (temporarily) – enabling you to break down the door.

Give the chest to the monkey grinder (after he's retrieved the sprite from the Guild Hall door) to dispose of him.

Come on, I'm not doing all the work! Just think of those poor, stuck souls out there, screaming pleas of help. Help me help them if you have any pity or an ounce of human goodfellowship. Right! If that hasn't wrung the strings of your heart – go jump down a trap-door. Send tips or maps to: STEEL TIPS, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*



WIPE OUT!

Win yourself an Atari 520 ST and ELIMINATOR – Hewson lash out with all 16-bits firing!

ELIMINATE your craving for arcade action with **Hewson**'s brilliant hit game ***Eliminator*** – it's reviewed this issue on page 77 with a top-notch rating of 92%!

Ripping along a futuristic road with oncoming aliens calls for quick thinking, fast movements, and don't dare take your finger off the fire-button! ***Eliminator*** is Hewson's first ST game, and what better way to celebrate the fact than by giving one away – an ST that is.

In addition to receiving the 520 ST, the winner also gets a copy of ST ***Eliminator***. And is that all? No, by golly! TEN additional runners-up also get a copy of ***Eliminator*** on any of its formats: that's Spectrum, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST or Amiga.

To be in with a chance of winning some Hewson goodies answer the following mind-bogglingly difficult questions, in true jovial Hewson style, and complete the form . . .

1) Which of these song lines does not have the word ROAD in it?
a) Hit The Road Jack . . .
b) There's A Bright Golden Haze On The Meadow . . .
c) Follow The Yellow Brick Road . . .

2) What is the worst possible thing that could happen to your copy of *Eliminator*?
a) The sticky label comes off
b) A pack of mutant tiger-hounds from hell destroy your house and eat your copy of *Eliminator* and digest it.
c) You own a Dragon

3) How many Hewson games has TGM reviewed?
a) All of them
b) Some of them
c) None of them

3) Finally, complete this sentence in no more than 20 words: "I would like to be an Eliminator because . . . "

Write the answers down on a postcard, or the back of a sealed envelope, together with your name, address and computer owned, and send it to **ELIMINATOR COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***. All entries must be received at TGM Mission Control by October 20, and entrants must abide by the competition rules detailed in the masthead.

To help Hewson plan ahead please answer the following questions, don't worry – they're not part of the competition!
Favourite Hewson game: ....
Do you usually buy games on disk or cassette: ....
If you intend to buy a new computer soon, which one?: ....

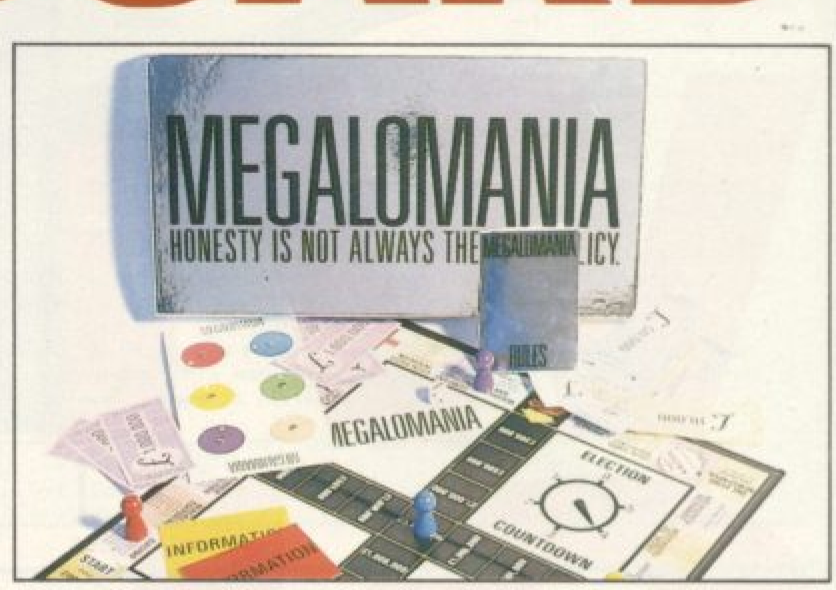
GOING RIGHT OVERBOARD

What's going to be Number 1 boardgame for Christmas 1988? If you knew the answer to that, you could make a fortune. With all the selling done for the Christmas sales bonanza, it's time to get the designs and packaging right for the winter selection, so no one's saying anything nor giving much away.

We did get our hands on a couple from **Henry Games**, the people responsible for the excellent *Vultures* and (reviewed below) *Ascent*, which are already in the shops. *Megalomania* and *Lateral Thinking* are each designed to appeal to different elements of the games-playing public.

Megalomania is the flashy one. Dazzlingly presented in a shimmering silver box, it is replete with elements intended to impress . . . suitably, since this is a political election game. Although there's plenty of opportunity for devious dealings, *Megalomania* probably best suited to players enjoying long, thoughtfully drawn-out games.

Lateral Thinking is really heavy-going, but it might well delight chess players who fancy something a bit different – it's endorsed by the National Chess Federation. It's hard to get into, the sort of game requiring much practice before you can start playing for real. Looks good though.



ASCENT

Henry Games, 2-8 players, around £20

Because it's there! Recognise the cry? Yes, it's every mountaineer's answer to the favourite chestnut 'why do you climb mountains?' *Ascent* is the wimp's way out – thrills without peril.

The dangerous peak is printed on a board, with base camp, huts and mountain tents on points along routes to the summit.

The objective – to reach the top before your opponents – is achieved by using set routes, individually coloured, and ascending further with every turn.

From base camp all players choose a route. Each turn players state to where they intend travelling, and check with the equipment, rations and weather chart to see what's needed.

Players have a selection of red and black cards numbered one to ten, which relate to the equipment, rations and weather required on each move. You pick a card from a shuffled pack and if it matches your card number, or is higher, the journey can proceed. However, if the number can't be matched it's back to base camp you go.

Avalanches are a killing hazard if you get caught in one. At the top of the board there are avalanche dials. Every turn you throw the die twice – first to select which avalanche dial is to be moved and the second to select by how much. When a dial goes round and hits zero an avalanche occurs on the sites mentioned on the dial, and any players on that site fall to their death.

The game continues until one player reaches the summit or all players have fallen down the slopes.

THE VERDICT

Ascent starts slowly, as players wait at base camp to collect cards to prepare for the journey. So, it's only half way through the game that things really start moving. The avalanche counters begin to reach boiling point, cards start running low and everyone tries and finds the safest route. Presentation of the game is excellent with strong laminated cards, attractive board and twiddly dials to fiddle with. Not an essential purchase, but play it if you get the chance.



PSI

Paradgim Games, 2-7 players

You class yourself as a real bitch, don't you? The kind of person who really doesn't care what they say about who? If so, you'll positively rave over *PSI* (Psychology, Slander, Intuition), a game which relies on nothing but your opinions of others. Put simply, you're trying to guess people's identities by comparing them to objects.

Each player takes possession of one of the seven characters – illustrated by the seven deadly sins: sloth, envy, pride, avarice, gluttony, lust and anger.

To kick off, player one takes a personality card from the 'rather clever card dispenser', which provides them with a character (Queen Victoria, Gloria Hunniford, John Cleese or one of the other players or a friend you all know). Then all the other players take a *PSI* card and ask a question.

For example: player one's card says 'You are John Cleese'. The *PSI* card asks 'What kind of punctuation mark are you?' Player one's answer would probably be along the lines of 'an exclamation mark'. The simple idea follows through a section of the game until one player guesses the character's identity.

Points are awarded to the character card holder and the player who guessed correctly, depending on how quickly the identity is discovered. Scored points are translated into steps around the board and players move their counter. First one past the finishing post is the winner.

But before the game concludes, the winner is subjected to a final round, asking other players *PSI* questions.

THE VERDICT

A lot of fun can be had with *PSI* – if you're playing with the right kind of people (ie, don't care what they say). It's a great theme to put onto a board game and simple to play . . . though not simple to play well (as Paradigm say).

Highly entertaining, and well packaged (though putting together the jigsaw board is a game in itself). Highly recommended.




MEL CROUCHER & ROBIN EVANS PRESENT
MERCY DASH
NOTICE
THIS COMIC STRIP HAS BEEN CANCELLED, AND ITS STAR, Ms DASH, HAS BEEN ARRESTED. WE ARE INSTEAD DEPICTING HER TRIAL. BETTER THAN ALL THAT SMUT AND BAD BEHAVIOUR USUALLY FOUND ON THIS PAGE!
PART 3 THE VILLAIN UNMASKED
LEMMEGO, YA FASHISKS! I'M SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE THIRD PART OF MY SLEAZY THRILLER!
SILENCE! MR JUSTICE WILBY-DUNNE IS ABOUT TO LAY DOWN THE LAW!
JUST YOU KEEP THE 3-PIECE SLEAZY THRILLER UNDER THE OVERCOAT!!
MERCEDES GIUSTA DASH-- YOU ARE ACCUSED OF A SERIES OF GRIEVIOUS OFFENCES - AMONG THEM, EXTORTION, BLACKMAIL, MURDER, CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, FAILING TO FULFILL CONTRACTS, FAILING TO ENTERTAIN YOUR READERS, SMOKING CIGARETTES IN A PUBLIC CARTOON STRIP AND RIDING A BICYCLE NAKED. HOW DO YOU PLEAD?
LIKE THIS: WAAAAH! DON'T PUT ME IN CLINK, JUDGE! BOO HOO!!
TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, GO LAY AN EGG, YOU OLD BLACK CROW! I DON'T SING TILL I SEE MY LAWYER! WERIZZY?!
RIGHT HERE, SNOOKUMS!
UNCLE GROUCHO!
YOU WIN A FAT CIGAR! I'M HERE TO DEFEND YOU! I'VE BROUGHT MY BRIEFCASE! AND IF THOSE BRIEFS AREN'T INSIDE IT BY THE END OF THE DAY, IT GOES BACK TO THE STORE...
M'LU-U-UD! THEY'RE MUCKING ABO-OU-OUT!
SOUNDS LIKE I MAY BE HAVING MARX AGAINST ME!
MR HARRY VAULTING, PROSECUTION, CALLS HIS FIRST WITNESS... MR PAUL COOPER
MR COOPER, DO YOU RECOGNISE THE WOMAN IN THE DOCK?
YEAH! IT'S MERCY! HIYA, MERCY!
HIYA, PAUL!
AHEM... MERCY DASH - IN WHOSE CARTOON STRIP, YOU WERE MADE THE BUTT OF A CRUEL JOKE...
OH, THAT! YEAH, THEY SPELT THALAMUS WRONGLY, AND SAID THE PCW SHOW WAS AT OLYMPIA IN THE SAME PANEL.
ER-'THEY'...?
MEL CROUCHER - OR MORE LIKELY THAT SKINNY BLOKE WHO DRAWS THE PICTURES... THINGY...
'THINGY'?
CAN I GET BACK TO THE PCW SHOW NOW?
HACK HACK KOFF
FAUGH! THESE FAT CIGARS ARE ORRUBLE! WHAT'S IN 'EM?
FAT
THERE GOES THE BUTT OF ANOTHER CRUEL JOKE
MY NEXT WITNESS IS MASTER PLEBLY, BUT HE IS UNABLE TO ATTEND AS HE IS COLLECTING BROCHURES AT THE PCW SHOW. HE HAS, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED HIS FEELINGS IN THIS LETTER. I QUOTE: "MERCY DASH ISN'T FUNNY. WHY CAN'T WE HAVE SEVENTEEN PAGES OF CUTEY-POO, WHICH IS BRILL..."
ONE MOMENT... IS MR. POO IN COURT?
NO, M'LUD.
WHO... OR WHAT IS CUTEY-POO?
WELL, MLUD, HE... IT...
IF I MAY BUTT IN...
...PERHAPS, WITH THE AID OF THIS DIAGRAM, I CAN ANSWER THAT. CUTEY-POO IS EITHER A ONE-CELL ORGANISM OR AN AMIABLE INVERTEBRATE, POPULAR WITH PLEBLY BECAUSE THE FORMER OPTION HAS MUCH IN COMMON WITH PLEBLY'S BRAIN, AND...
YOU CANNOT REPLY TO JUST CRITICISM WITH CRASS INSULTS!
YOU'RE WRONG, HARRY! I JUST DID!
I INTEND TO CALL TO THE STAND, SIR CLIVE SINCLAIR, MR ALAN SUGAR, MR BRUCE EVERISS, MS NIKKI PENNY, MESSRS DOMARK PLC, MR GRAHAM KIDD MR CLEM CHAMBERS, MS PAULA BYRNE, MS CLAIRE HIRSCH... ALL PEOPLE MADE CLOWNS OF BY MS DASH!
THEN THAT DOES IT! I INTEND TO CALL MISS SUKI TANZI!
WHO IS SHE?
MY GOILFRIEND. I WANNA SEE IF SHE'S FREE TONIGHT. MAY I USE YOUR 'PHONE?
OY! WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO?
COOL IT, FLATFOOT! I'M JUST GOING OVER TO WHISPER SOMETHING IN THE JUDGE'S MOUTH!
MEMBERS OF THE JURY - MY WITNESSES ARE UNABLE TO LEAVE THE PCW SHOW... BUT IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT THIS TROLLOP, THIS, THIS VERITABLE BIMBO HAS MORE THAN ONCE USED HER FEMININE WILES TO DECEIVE....
GUB!
...SHALL WE SAY, UH, NINE? AT YOUR PLACE? TEN? OKAY, TEN, BUT THAT'S ALL I CAN AFFORD...
ANYWAY - THAT DIAGRAM IS NOT OF CUTEY-POO.
I MAY BE INACCURATE, BUT I'M NOT CRAZY!
MEANWHILE, AT THE SHOW... (THIS PANEL IS POSTPONED FROM LAST MONTH AFTER EVANS CHOPPED IT FROM UNCLE MEL'S SCRIPT... IT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE, BUT EVANS LOST HIS PCW SHOW SUPPLEMENT...)
ACTIVISION
MEDIATHINGY
U.S.GLASNOST
KEEPING FIT, MERCY?
I'M JUST WARNING PLEBLY NOT TO WRITE ANY MORE CRAPPY LETTERS.
OH. WELL WHERE IS PLEBLY?
IN THE PUNCHBAG.
THILLYTHODTHOFT
NEWSFIELD
TGM
CRASH
ZZAP 64
ZZIT 69
FEAR
CONSTIPATED? READ 'FEAR'
HELLO. I'M BARNABY PAGE. I CAN'T THINK OF A FUNNY LINE JUST NOW....
ER - WHO ARE THESE GIRLS?
...I REALLY DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO CONTINUE WITH THIS FARCICAL CASE. THOSE WHO FALL VICTIM TO MERCY'S PLOYS SHOULD NOT BE SO GULLIBLE - AND THOSE WHO FIND HER ADVENTURES UNAMUSING SHOULD NOT READ THEM....
RIGHT ON, YOUR HONOUR! NOW, AS MY UNDERSTUDY'S MINDING THE FORT AT THE PCW SHOW - AT EARL'S COURT - WE CAN REPAIR TO THE PUB!
GOOD IDEA! THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DISCUSS HERE WHICH CANNOT BE MORE CHEERFULLY CHEWED OVER AT THE RAM AND INTERFACE. LAST ONE OUT GETS IN THE FIRST ROUND!
ANNA! SMILE! ROBIN'S DRAWING US IN HIS COMIC STRIP THAT HE DOES...
BUT... THAT'S HIM OVER THERE...
YES. CLEVER, ISN'T HE!
I'M FRANCIS MABLE AND I'M NICER LOOKING IN REAL LIFE...
HIC! YOU'VE SEEN THE NEWSFIELD STAND... NOW THIS IS THE NEWSFIELD KEEL OVER!
WE'LL HAVE TO GET ROBIN SOME MORE PHOTOS OF US. WE'VE LOOKED LIKE THIS SINCE THE JERSEY CONFERENCE!
HEHEH! HI, KIDS! CLEM CHAMBERS HERE. TERHERHER! WHATJAGET IF YOU CROSS A NAPPLE WITH A NUN? HEH! A COMPUTER

NEW LOW PRICE ST!



ST PRICE INCREASE

Due to a worldwide shortage of memory chips, prices of many computers have gone up. From April 1988, the Atari ST range is also likely to be affected. For details of any price increase, please return the coupon below for our latest literature.

£260 +VAT=£299

ONLY FROM SILICA

Finally, there's a personal computer that not only solves problems like other computers, but also solves the one problem that other computers have created. Affordability. Silica Shop are pleased to present the ST range of personal/business computers from Atari. The ST was designed utilizing the most recent breakthroughs in semiconductor technology, producing a personal computer that performs tasks with fewer parts. Which means it costs less to make. And less to buy. The latest ST computers now include built in power supplies and built in disk drives. The TOS operating system and GEM window environment are now on ROM chips which are already installed in the ST keyboard. This enables automatic instant booting when you switch on. Silica Shop are pleased to offer the complete Atari ST range. Our mail order department is situated in Sidcup and we have 3 retail outlets at Sidcup, Lion House (Tottenham Court Rd) and Selfridges (Oxford Street). We have eight years experience of Atari products, longer than any other UK company, and are well established as the UK's No.1 Atari specialist. With a group turnover of over £9 million and in excess of 80 staff, we offer you unbeatable service and support. We provide several facilities which you will find invaluable during your Atari computing life and most of these facilities are available **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We suggest that you read through what we have to offer, before you decide where to purchase your Atari ST.

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When you purchase any Atari ST keyboard, you will not only receive the best value for money computer on the market, but you will also receive the following from Atari Corporation as part of the package:

** BASIC Language Disk * BASIC Manual * ST Owners Manual * TOS/GEM on ROM*

If you buy your ST from Silica Shop, you will also receive:

** NEOchrome Sampler - colour graphics program * 1st Word - Word Processor*

In addition, we at Silica would like to see you get off to a flying start with your new computer, so we have put together a special **ST STARTER KIT** worth over £100, which we are giving away **FREE OF CHARGE** with every ST computer purchased at our normal retail prices. This kit is available **ONLY FROM SILICA** and is aimed at providing users with a valuable introduction to the world of computing. We are continually upgrading the ST Starter Kit, which contains public domain and other licensed software, as well as books, magazines and accessories all relevant to ST computing. Return the coupon below for full details.

DEDICATED SERVICING - Only From Silica

At Silica Shop, we have a dedicated service department of seven full time Atari trained technical staff. This team is totally dedicated to servicing Atari computer products. Their accumulated knowledge, skill and experience makes them second to none in their field. You can be sure that any work carried out by them is of the highest standard. A standard of servicing which we believe you will find **ONLY FROM SILICA**. In addition to providing full servicing facilities for Atari ST computers (both in and out of warranty), our team is also able to offer memory and modulator upgrades to ST computers.

1Mb RAM UPGRADE: Our upgrade on the standard Atari 520ST-M or 520ST-FM keyboard will increase the memory from 512K to a massive 1024K. It has a full 1 year warranty and is available from Silica at an additional retail price of only £86.96 (+VAT = £100).

TV MODULATOR UPGRADE: Silica can upgrade the 1040ST-F to include a TV modulator so that you can then use it with your TV set. This is an internal upgrade and does not involve any untidy external boxes. A cable to connect your ST to any domestic TV is included in the price of the upgrade which is only £49 (inc VAT). The upgrade is also available for early 520ST computers at the same price.

THE FULL STOCK RANGE - Only From Silica

We aim to keep stocks of all Atari related products and our warehouse carries a stock of over £½ million. We import many software titles direct from the USA and you will find that we have new releases in advance of many of our competitors. Unlike dealers who may only stock selected titles, we have the full range. In addition, we carry a complete line of all books which have been written about the Atari ST. A range as wide as ours is something you will find is available **ONLY FROM SILICA**.

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Rest assured that when you buy your ST from Silica Shop, you will be fully supported. Our free mailings give news of releases and developments. This will help to keep you up to date with new software releases as well as what's happening in the Atari market. And in addition, our sales staff are at the end of a telephone line to service all of your Atari requirements. If you purchase an ST from Silica and would like any technical advice, we have a full time technical support team to help you get the best from your computer. Because we have both the staff and the systems specifically dedicated to providing after sales service on Atari ST computers, we are confident that our users enjoy an exceptionally high level of support. This can be received **ONLY FROM SILICA**.

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Most orders are processed through our computer within 24 hours of receiving them. Most hardware orders are sent by the overnight GROUP 4 courier service FREE OF CHARGE to customers within the UK. This method helps to ensure minimum delay and maximum protection.

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We hope that the combination of our low prices, FREE UK delivery service, FREE Starter Kit and FREE after sales support, will be enough to make you buy your Atari equipment from Silica Shop. If however, there is something you wish to purchase, and you find one of our competitors offering it at a lower price, then please contact our sales department, providing us with our competitor's name, address and telephone number. If our competitor has the goods in stock, we will normally match the offer (on a 'same product - same price' basis) and still provide you with our normal free delivery. We realise that we are not the only company who will match a competitor's price. However, if you come to us for a price match, you will also be entitled to our after sales service, including free newsletters and technical support. This makes our price match promise rather special, something you will receive **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We don't want you to go anywhere else for your Atari products. So shop at Silica, the UK's No1 Atari Specialist.

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SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE!

There is nothing that can compare with the incredible value for money offered by Atari's 520ST-FM. For only £260 (+VAT=£299), you can purchase a powerful 512K RAM computer, with a 95 key keyboard (including numeric keypad), MIDI interface, GEM, a palette of 512 colours, mouse controller, and a 512K built-in disk drive. The 520ST-FM has a TV modulator built-in, and comes with a lead to allow you to plug it straight into any domestic colour television set. The mains transformer is also built-in to the keyboard, so there are no messy external boxes. You couldn't wish for a more compact, powerful and stylish unit. Atari ST computers are now firmly established in the UK, there are nearly 500 software titles already available for a wide variety of applications and the list is growing all the time. And that's not all. When you buy your new 520ST-FM (or any Atari ST computer) from Silica Shop, you will get a lot more, including a FREE Silica ST Starter Kit worth over £100. Read the ONLY FROM SILICA section on the left, to see why you should buy your new high power, low price 520ST-FM from Silica Shop, the UK's No1 Atari Specialists. For further details of the range of Atari ST computers and the FREE Silica ST Starter Kit, complete and return the reply coupon below.

ATARI 520ST-FM NOW ONLY £260 (+VAT=£299)

520ST-FM with 512K RAM & mono monitor £399 (inc VAT) **Upgrade from 512K RAM to 1024K RAM £100** (inc VAT)

ATARI 1040ST-F - NEW PRICE

We are pleased to announce a new reduced price point on the 1040ST-F which is now available for only £499 (inc VAT). The 1040 is a powerful computer with 1Mb of RAM and also includes a built-in 1Mb double sided 3½" disk drive. The 1040 has been designed for use on business and professional applications most of which require a high resolution monochrome or colour monitor. It does not therefore have an RF modulator for use with a domestic TV set. Modulators can be fitted for £49 (inc VAT).

1040ST-F Keyboard Without Monitor	**£499** (inc VAT)
1040ST-F Keyboard + High Res SM125 Mono Monitor	**£599** (inc VAT)

If you would like further details of the 1040ST-F, return the coupon below.

MEGA ST's NOW IN STOCK

For the user who requires even more RAM than the 520 or 1040 ST's offer, the new MEGA ST computers are now available. There are two MEGA ST's, one with 2Mb of RAM and the other with a massive 4Mb. Both new computers are fully compatible with existing ST's and run currently available ST software. The MEGA ST's are styled as an expandable Central Processing Unit with open architecture and a detachable keyboard. They are supplied with GEM, a free mouse controller and all extras as with the 520 or 1040. Prices are as follows:

MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU	**£899** (inc VAT)
MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU + SM125 Mono Monitor	**£999** (inc VAT)
MEGA ST 4Mb Keyboard + CPU	**£1199** (inc VAT)
MEGA ST 4Mb Keyboard + CPU + SM125 Mono Monitor	**£1299** (inc VAT)

If you would like further details of the MEGA ST's, return the coupon below.

ATARI ST

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PLEASE SEND ME FREE LITERATURE ON THE ATARI ST

Mr/Mrs/Ms: .... Initials: .... Surname: ....

Address: ....

....

....

Postcode: ....

Do you already own a computer
If so, which one do you own? ....

TRIPPING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

Big Brother & The Holding Company, Pink Floyd, The Grateful Dead, Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds – yes, Robin Candy's put some flowers in his hair, tuned in, turned off, dropped a tab and got his act together with Jeff Minter's latest psychedelic experience – Trip-a-tron. **Don't ya just love the Sixties?**



Contemplating the ineffable: hairy Yak and light fantasist Jeff Minter

You can't really blame Jeff Minter, but damn it, I think I will anyway. The London Planetarium was once a place to go and sit with cricked neck and watch the heavens unfold to Patrick Moore's breathlessly excited monologues.

Until Jeff Minter.

But then, maybe it wasn't really Jeff's fault, perhaps his throwback Sixties upbringing is the real cause – too much Pink Floyd and those druggy, consciousness-expanding light shows they did.

You see, it all started some years ago on the Commodore 64 when Jeff Minter sought to create a new art form unique to the computer. The result was *Psychedelia*, the first light synthesiser. Everyone *liked* it, but couldn't think what to do with it. Jeff showed us. He hired the London Planetarium and gave computer versions of laser shows on its perfect dome.

He went on to develop the idea further with the Atari ST, utilising its greater range of colours to create even more dazzling effects. And *Colourspace* was born. An updated version – *Colourspace 2* no less – was promised, but failed to materialise.

The light synthesizer was Jeff Minter's pet project, he wrote that *Psychedelia* was 'the high point of my designing career', and was not about to be abandoned. A year's hard work has transformed the light synthesizer into its latest and greatest incarnation: *Trip-a-tron*.

But what exactly is a light synthesizer?

The nearest equivalent is a laser show, or the light shows found at some rock concerts, notably Pink Floyd of course. The screen is never static, consisting of an ever-changing sequence of colours and shapes generated in real-time by the operator. The system was designed to be part of an audio-visual experience. The light synthesizer is the visual component, while your favourite music provides the audio accompaniment.

Far out, man

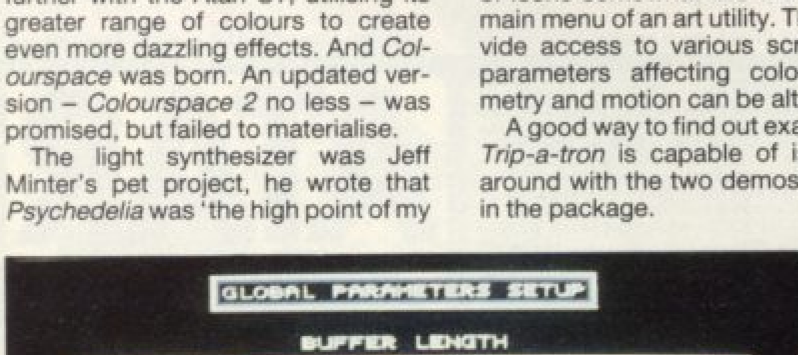
Running on the 520 ST, *Trip-a-tron* comes in a double-disk package complete with detailed manual. On loading, you're presented with a panel of icons somewhat like those on the main menu of an art utility. These provide access to various screens the parameters affecting colour, symmetry and motion can be altered.

A good way to find out exactly what *Trip-a-tron* is capable of is to play around with the two demos included in the package.

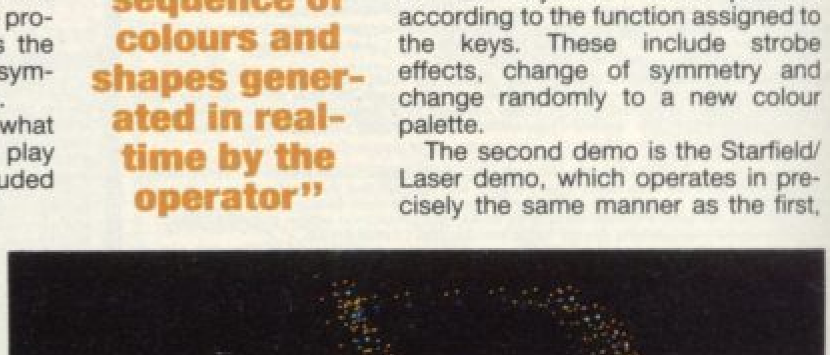
"The screen is never static, a changing sequence of colours and shapes generated in real-time by the operator"

The first shows off pattern generation. Moving the mouse and pressing its left button moves and creates patterns on screen, while pressing keys on the keyboard alters patterns according to the function assigned to the keys. These include strobe effects, change of symmetry and change randomly to a new colour palette.

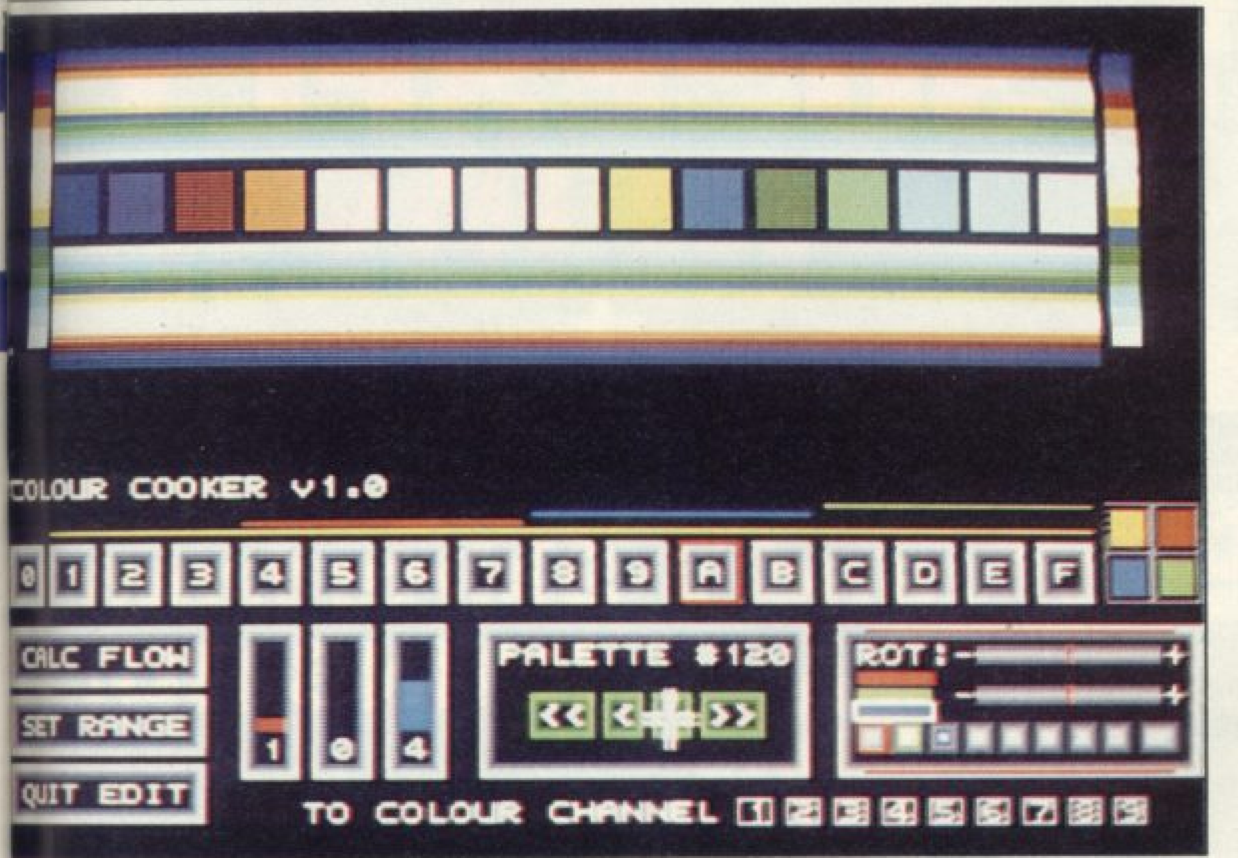
The second demo is the Starfield/Laser demo, which operates in precisely the same manner as the first,



Adjust mouse control options and pattern parameters with the global parameters screen



This screen allows the setting of pre-symmetry on the main plot routine



Using the colour cooker you can define any of 200 available palettes, set up to four rotation ranges and attach three oscillators to RGB within each range

but includes various laser and starfield effects.

It's from the control panel that you can customise *Trip-a-tron* to suit your own needs. Most important of the icons is the Key Macro Language (KML) icon. It takes you to the very core of *Trip-a-tron*. Stunning effects can be achieved by altering the various parameters available from the edit screens, but this is a bit limiting since sometimes it's desirable to alter certain effects actually during a performance when you can't really break off to get into the program.

KML is, in fact, a programming language. It can be used to assign a command or a string of commands to a particular key. As a language, it's very simple. All commands consist of a single keyword which can be abbreviated to the first three letters of the word, sometimes followed by a number of parameters separated by commas. There are no detailed program structures to be learnt.

Control of the program is limited to simple loops or conditional branches. All the commands are explained in detail with examples to show how they perform. *Trip-a-tron* can store a possible 128 programs in memory while running up to eight programs at once.

If you've got 1Mbyte or more of RAM, you can use the Internal Event Sequencer. This is used to initiate commands, or sequences of commands, automatically at the correct moment. You define the sequence in which KML programs are to be executed, and the program does the rest for you.

"Psychedelia was the high point of my designing career . . ." Jeff Minter

Another section of the program which requires at least 1Mbyte of RAM is the Video Sequencer. This allows *Neochrome*, *Degas Elite* or RLE files to be loaded. RLE (Run-Length Encoded) picture files are generated by *Trip-a-tron*, compressing data to take less disk space when saved than equivalent *Neochrome* or *Degas* files. Once in memory they can be subjected to a variety of manipulations including rotation in three dimensions, reflects and pixelisation. The program caters for single frames or entire animations.

Trip-a-tron can also be linked up to MIDI equipment, and via the KML, can used create more effects. Though the MIDI handling is very basic, it may be expanded in future updates.

Light fantastic

Trip-a-tron is an impressive program which does achieve what it sets out to do – stunning graphic display effects. It's at first complex and daunting, but the manual explains its features in sufficient depth to allay any fears. And this *is* Minter talking to you, so the manual is larded with his particular (peculiar?) sense of humour (the disks include a small RLE animation program suitably called SHEEP.PRG which saves out files with the filename extender of .BAA . . .)

In its present form, *Trip-a-tron*'s best use is for combining graphic effects and music and taping them onto video. But anyone interested in using the program commercially may be interested in a piece of hardware which links up to five STs and displays their combined output on a single screen. The hardware can fade any of the channels up or down, it provides RGB synch outputs and a separate monitor channel so that any channel can be previewed before being fed into the mix. We're assured by Llamasoft that the end effect is amazing – easy to believe when you consider that the display could support up to 80 colours simultaneously.

Llamasoft are also looking into the possibility of building a high-quality composite-video output and a Genlock into the hardware. This would really open up possibilities. Your customised graphic patterns could be combined with music and prerecorded footage to produce stunning video effects.

Trip-a-tron is unlikely to sell in great numbers. It is a very specific product. And unless you're prepared to take time and explore its possibilities thoroughly, it soon becomes boring. But if you're the sort of person who's a big fan of laser shows like those shown at the Planetarium, chances are you will get much enjoyment out of this unique product.

***Trip-a-tron*, Llamasoft, £34.95 for Atari ST. If you already own the ST version of *Colourspace*, you get a £10 discount on returning the *Colourspace* disk. Future *Trip-a-tron* updates will be available as finished for a 'nominal' sum. Llamasoft is at *49 Mount Pleasant, Tadley, Hants RG26 6BN*, Tel: 07356 4478.**



The pattern mode/edit allows you to chose between Decay, Line and Expander



SUPERFLY GLIDER!

Win a classy Pilot's Watch, Starglider II and T-Shirts from RAINBIRD!



GRAB A JOYSTICK and enter Jez Sans' universe of science fiction and fantasy in ***Starglider II***, the highest rated game this issue – coming in at 97% on both the Atari ST and Amiga.

And boy, were we impressed! When you've got a product with fast, smooth solid 3-D animation and gameplay which is just as absorbing as the graphics, you know it's something special!

Check out the three-page review (starting on page 64) for the lowdown on this sky-high product – you'll need to read it carefully, we'll be asking questions later (as they say).

To make sure you keep track of time when you're soaring around the Solice system, **Rainbird** are offering a ridiculously expensive pilot's watch as a first prize in this ***Starglider II*** competition.

The watch, made by Time Chain in Japan, is analog, and has real style. The strap's made from pigskin leather, and the watch has a stainless steel base with a gold surround.

Not only can you tell the time with it, but it also has separate dials for the date, day, month and dual-time. And it has a sun and moon indicator. All this and water resistant too – handy when dealing with space whales!

As well as being the owner of this elegant time piece, the winner receives a copy of ***Starglider II*** on the ST or Amiga, and a trendy Rainbird T-Shirt. Don't despair if you're a not the first-prize winner. For four second-prize winners there is a copy of the game and T-shirt – and for five runners-up there's a T-Shirt each.

To win a prize have a look at the six sentences printed here, taken from the review. In each case there's a word missing. Fill in the word in the boxes. Then take the first letter from each word and you'll discover you have another word related to the review; tell us what the word is and how it features in the game.

All the answers are in the review, if you look for them.

Having completed the entry form, cut it out or send a photocopy to: **STARGLIDER II COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE,** *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.* Make sure all entries are here by October 20, and follow the competition rules as detailed in the masthead – anyone who doesn't will be forced to listen to some of Hermann Krud's poetry (ten times worse than Vogon)!

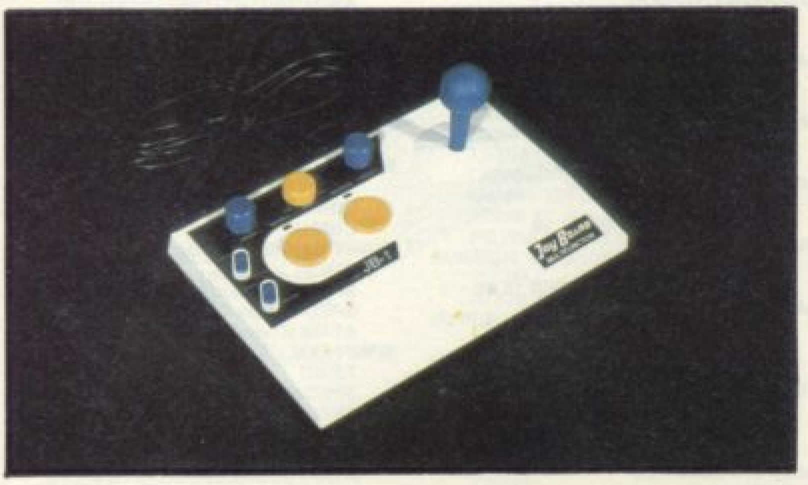
1: The [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] Prator of Ergon was displeased . . .
2: . . . most planets inside a [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] system of tunnels.
3: . . . guarded by the temperamental robot [ ][ ][ ][ ].
4: . . . break software sales [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ], but most likely . . .
5: . . . have become [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] famous, but retracted . . .
6: . . . remain active in [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ], and may be . . .

The word made up from the initial letters is: ....
And features in Starglider II as: ....

Name ....
Address ....
....
Postcode ....
Computer owned: Atari ST [ ] Amiga [ ]

the GAMES machine
COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

SHOPPING



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This super control console provides you with every possible firing and movement option. Directional control is switchable between microswitch-action joystick and two games paddles. Firing can be activated with two large fire buttons and Auto Fire features variable frequency setting. Two LED's indicate firing action. The unit is connected via a 2 metre long cable. Suitable for Commodore VC-20,C64,C128,C128D and AMIGA 500.
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This excellent joystick features microswitch directional control and fire action. A unique variable tension control allows the user to adjust the direction control to extra sensitive, normal and firm. A wide base and four suction cups provide good table-top operation.
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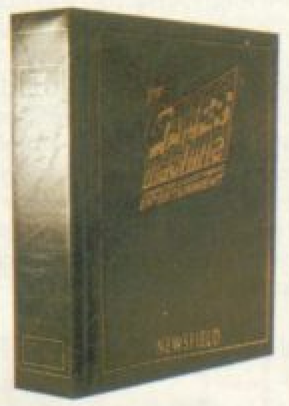
DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (normal)
Features arcade quality microswitches, dual fire buttons, robust steel shaft and rubber return for smooth control and longer life. Extra long 1.5m cord
DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (normal)
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The designer joystick with see-through body.
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ALEX KIDD, Mastertronic
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CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
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ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

ALTERNATE REALITY: THE CITY, Electronic Arts
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SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.44

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SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.95
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T232M
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T321M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99

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AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 6.44
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CARRIER COMMAND, Rainbird
T103M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 19.95
AMIGA disk OFFER 19.95

CONQUEROR, Superior
T287M
ARCHIMEDES EXP305 disk OFFER 19.95

DARK SIDE, Incentive
T208M
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SPEC+3 disk OFFER 11.95
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AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.95
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ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

DELTA, Thalamus
T236M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 10.44

DELUXE MONOPOLY, Leisure Genius
T211M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 10.40
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 12.95
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
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DELUXE PHOTOLAB, Electronic Arts
T265M
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AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.99
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99

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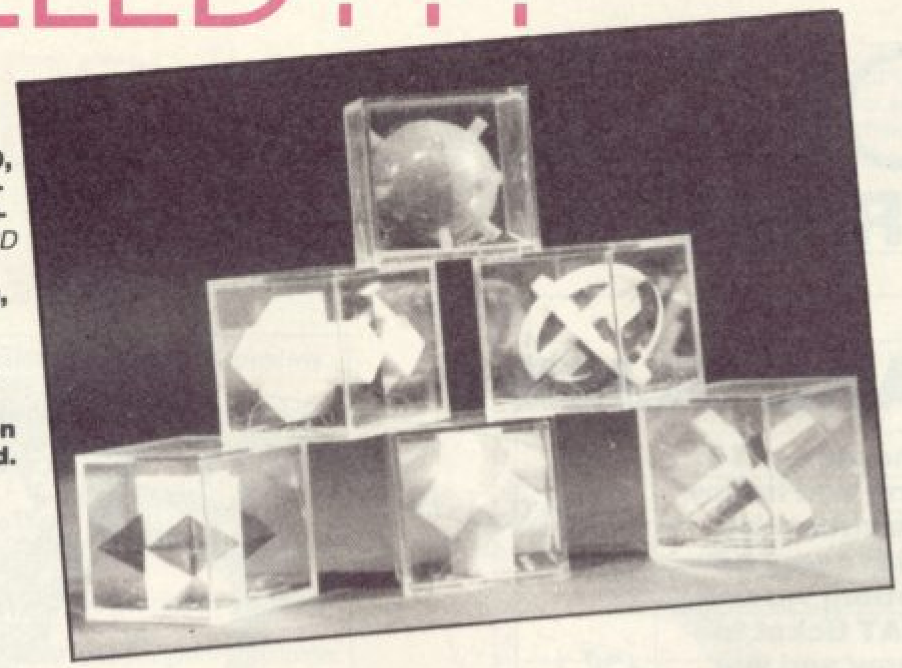
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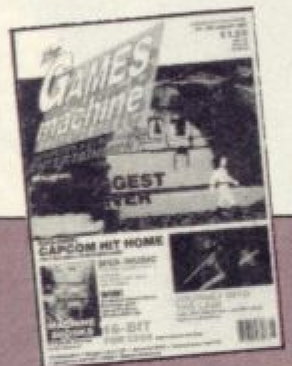
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Players take the part of football club managers, responsible for the long-term strategy and many of the more immediate, tactical decisions. Clubs take part in a league made up of four divisions with 16 clubs in each, 64 clubs in total. The first thing to do is name your club – real names aren't allowed – decide its nationality and actually design your team.

Designing a team involves choosing the positions of your 15 team members (later increased to 21) from the four on offer; goalkeeper, defender, midfielder and attacker. After that you distribute 61 points among them to determine their ratings, seven being the highest, one the lowest. On the whole ratings are experience related, so highly rated players will tend to be older with consequent injury factors. A similar process of selection is also followed for the club's Youth Team.

Next, determine your club's financial details by adding the contribution of your club – £500,000 – plus the amount given by the sponsor you choose. Sponsors range from being reliable and offering long-term contracts with not much money, to being prone to bankruptcy and offering short-term contracts but lots of money. They also vary in their expectations of how high the club should finish in the league.

Given your financial status you can then decide how many seats to add to your home ground at £10 per seat. Remember to leave money for paying the team's wages though! Once all this is done the season can begin.

To every season . . .
Seasons last for 32 game weeks, with winners announced at the end. Then the top three teams in each division (excluding the First) are promoted and the bottom three (excluding the Fourth) relegated. After a short pause the next season begins.

Like the one before it, this season includes 30 league matches, playing the other 15 teams in the division, once at home and once away. In addition there are two cup games, the League and Soccer Supremos Cups, plus five weeks for International matches. (The managers of national sides are established by voting.) Youth team matches mirror senior games in timing, while a club can play a friendly per week.

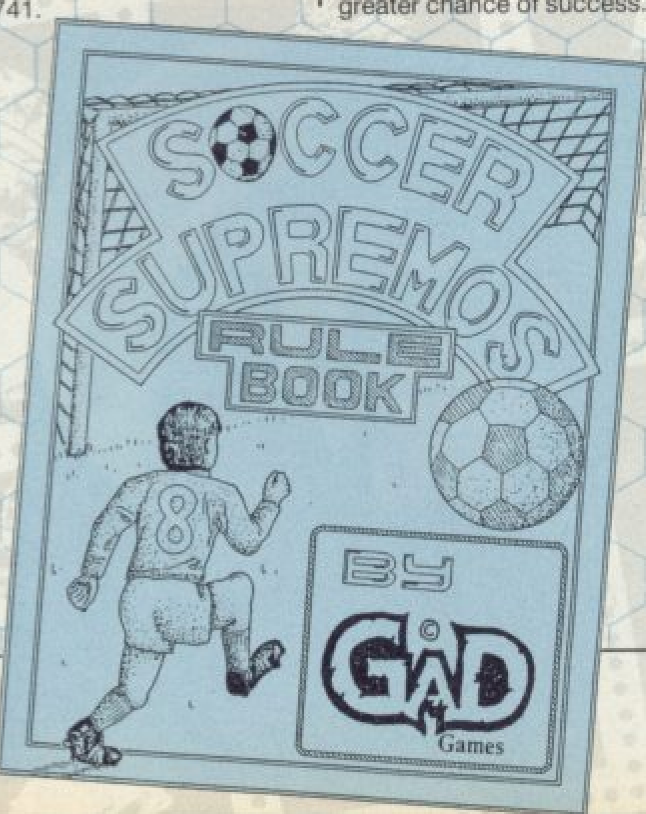
For each match the manager should select who is going to be in the team, and which of them will be penalty taker and captain together with a substitute.

Then the aggression factor of each part of the team must be filled in. You may be helped in your decisions by spying on another club. It's possible to learn about players in certain positions, players of a set rating, or even the club's financial situation.

This might also be useful for transfer deals where you offer a certain amount to a player's club manager. Alternatively you can sell or swap players. You may also choose to pay for a youth team trainer, fitness coach, skills coach or physiotherapist, or all four.

Soccer Supremos takes an unusual subject for a PBM game and hence is very interesting. Credits cost 30p, and depending on what stage you joined the game and your position within it, turns cost between 60p and £1.20 (both including postage). The Rulebook is free from **GAD GAMES** with the first turn normally costing £3. If you mention **TGM**, however, then it's just £2.

The address is *Morland House, Poughill, Cornwall EX23 9EL* ☎ 0288 4741.



IT'S STILL A CRIME

On the letters front advice continues to pour in for KJC's ***It's A Crime.*** **Malcolm Sims of Canterbury, Kent is among the most detailed:**

To maintain game positions, ten orders per turn are essential. Once a player has got to 40 blocks, hopefully by turn 15-18, he should then split his gang costing another two credits per turn – £3.00 in all per game turn.

As for gang warfare it does take place and is quite tough. In my game the first gang to attack I wiped out, but then had to ally myself with two other gangs to play them off against each other.

Eventually you become Mob Boss if you are lucky and good enough. The aim is to get 80 businesses controlled by gangs, however in my experience this is almost impossible because 1) by this time all your allies will be attacking you, and 2) if you hit back they just drop out, meaning you have to rely on a 15% chance on inactive gangs joining your gang.

Incidentally Mob Boss costs an extra 75p per turn.

Here are some hints that I know of:

1) Expand as soon as possible, don't worry about notoriety.
2) Use drugs early in large quantities – higher morale gives a greater chance of success.
3) To get cash early on, Firebomb Industrial or Warehouse sites.
4) Later on do a Mass Ambush, eg seven or eight ambushes on one gang. You will gain lots of Notoriety and possibly wipe out a gang of Mega Notoriety.
5) Buy Shotguns and Machine Guns early on while they are still available.
6) For Mob Boss aim for 40 blocks, 15, 000 dollars, 16 machine guns, 25 pros and lots more shotguns, punks, etc.

As for the Mob Bosses – only Mass Attack or their original gang will hurt them.

7) In Gang Warfare try R1 (first order) and F1 (last order) on enemy turf.

Phil Gyford of Witham, Essex has written in to recommend a game run by a friend of his:

I've just started playing the first game of *The Hitmakers At The End Of The Universe* by **Drako Games**. It's run by Mark Drakford who I met in Game 1 of *Conquest*. It's a very entertaining game and has the added attraction of a free fanzine each turn (to which I contribute). It only costs £1 a turn – cheaper than some inferior games, such as *Troll's Bottom*. Perhaps you could review it? The address is **Drako Games**, *144 Crossing Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 6PN.*

We're certainly interested in reviewing such an interestingly titled game, perhaps next month if we have the time and space. Or perhaps a reader already playing it might like to send in an opinion.

Barring natural disasters we'll most definitely review a PBM you can play on Atari ST. ***Astrowars*** **comes on a 3.5" disk. Turns are entered by running the program and saving your moves when you're happy they're correct. If you can't wait for the TGM review, contact ASTRAA at** ***Allonby Cottage, Langrigg, Aspatra, Carlisle CA5 3LH.*** **Turns cost £1.20 each, including postage both ways.**

Our address remains POSTE HASTE, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.* Views, reviews and general comments are extremely welcome and the most interesting will get a prize.

Mankind discovers the stars

TRAVELLER 2300

Roleplaying Game
Games Designers' Workshop, £12.95



Exploring the universe with a very attractive partner

The year is 2300 AD, and on 50 worlds the colonists from planet Earth struggle against inhospitable environments, dangerous native life–forms and hostile aliens. Devastated by global war at the end of the 20th century, mankind gradually repaired its devastated world. By the middle of the 22nd century a working stardrive propulsion system had been developed, and explorers began to spread among the nearby star-systems.

Although some lessons were learned from the catastrophe of war, the nations of Earth remained divided, and there were many armed struggles, ranging from local skirmishes to full-scale wars.

Apart from internal strife, humanity is beginning to be threatened from the outside. The Eta Bootis colony is attacked by a war fleet of the enigmatic alien Kafers. It is against this background that players of *Traveller 2300* act out their adventures.

Games Designers Workshop made their name with the original *Traveller* system, the first successful RPG to escape from the world of fantasy dungeoneering to a science–fiction setting full of starships, strange new worlds, new life and new civilisations. *Traveller* itself was phenomenally successful and is still widely played. However, beyond the title *Traveller 2300* has little in common with GDW's earlier game, for the rules system and setting are completely new.

Rather than the grand, high–tech, far–future universe of the older game, *Traveller 2300* puts its players in a world where technological and cultural changes have not been so great as to alter life beyond recognition of what we're used to today.

GDW have been exceeding thorough in developing the background for their game. The boxed set itself contains plenty of information to get new players started. There are lists of all the settled worlds, and an accurate map of all the stars within 50 light years of the Sun. Also a detailed history of the next three centuries and lists of typical weapons and other equipment.

More detail is available in the form of a growing number of supplements providing pre-written adventures and background material. Perhaps the most immediately useful of these is the *Colonial Atlas* (£5.95, 96pp) which provides a brief description of the star systems of each of mankind's 29 full–scale colonies, along with climate, geology and native lifeforms on each world.

One appealing aspect of *Traveller 2300* is that, unlike most games with an interplanetary setting, although the universe is vast, the total number of known worlds is sufficiently small to be able to give a fair amount of detail on them all in a single volume. In many ways this allows players greater freedom. Referees can allow them to visit any world without fear of getting beyond the limits of the published background material.

However, excellence of setting and availability of high–quality background material by themselves don't make a successful roleplaying game – the rule system is every bit as important. And this is where *Traveller 2300* lets itself down badly.

Two rule booklets are provided in the basic boxed set – one manual for players, one for referees. The players' manual contains the bulk of background material and rules for character generation and skills. The referee's has details of combat and skill resolution systems, starship and space combat rules, together with systems for generating non–player characters' personalities, random – but realistic – solar systems, and for handling encounters between adventures and the local animal life.

On skimming through the rules you could be forgiven for thinking that the designers have left out a booklet. The skill resolution system takes up only six pages. Clearly insufficient.

GDW have opted for a skill system quite unlike that of any similar game. All use of skills by player characters, be it operations such as programming a computer, repairing a stardrive, or combat actions such as wrestling with an opponent or blasting a Kafer, is resolved through the concept of Tasks.

A Task is a single player action, and a given task is rated for difficulty, time taken, plus any special considerations (such as a Hazardous task which has extra penalties for failure). All these factors are combined to determine a difficulty number – a score which the player must exceed on a 10–sided die to succeed.

Bonuses for possession of appropriate skills are added to the die roll. The time taken to perform the task is determined by a separate roll. In the event of failure, the unlucky player gets to roll on a failure table to determine the seriousness of their mistake.

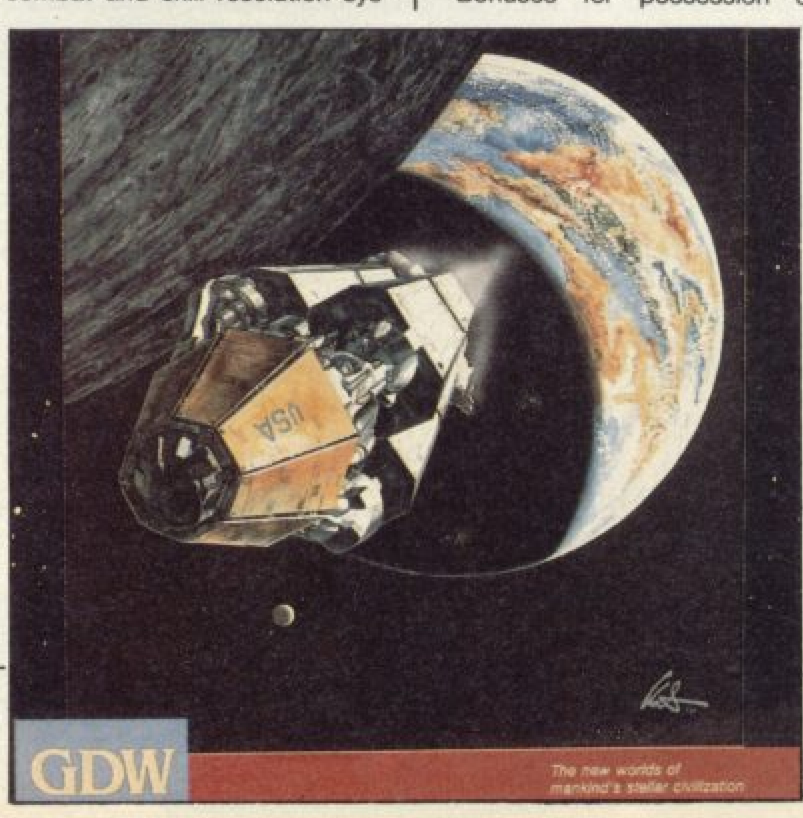
There are no more specific rules than these given – if players decide they want to try and do something, it is up to the referee to determine an appropriate Task, or set of Tasks, and to choose the difficulty numbers and so on for them.

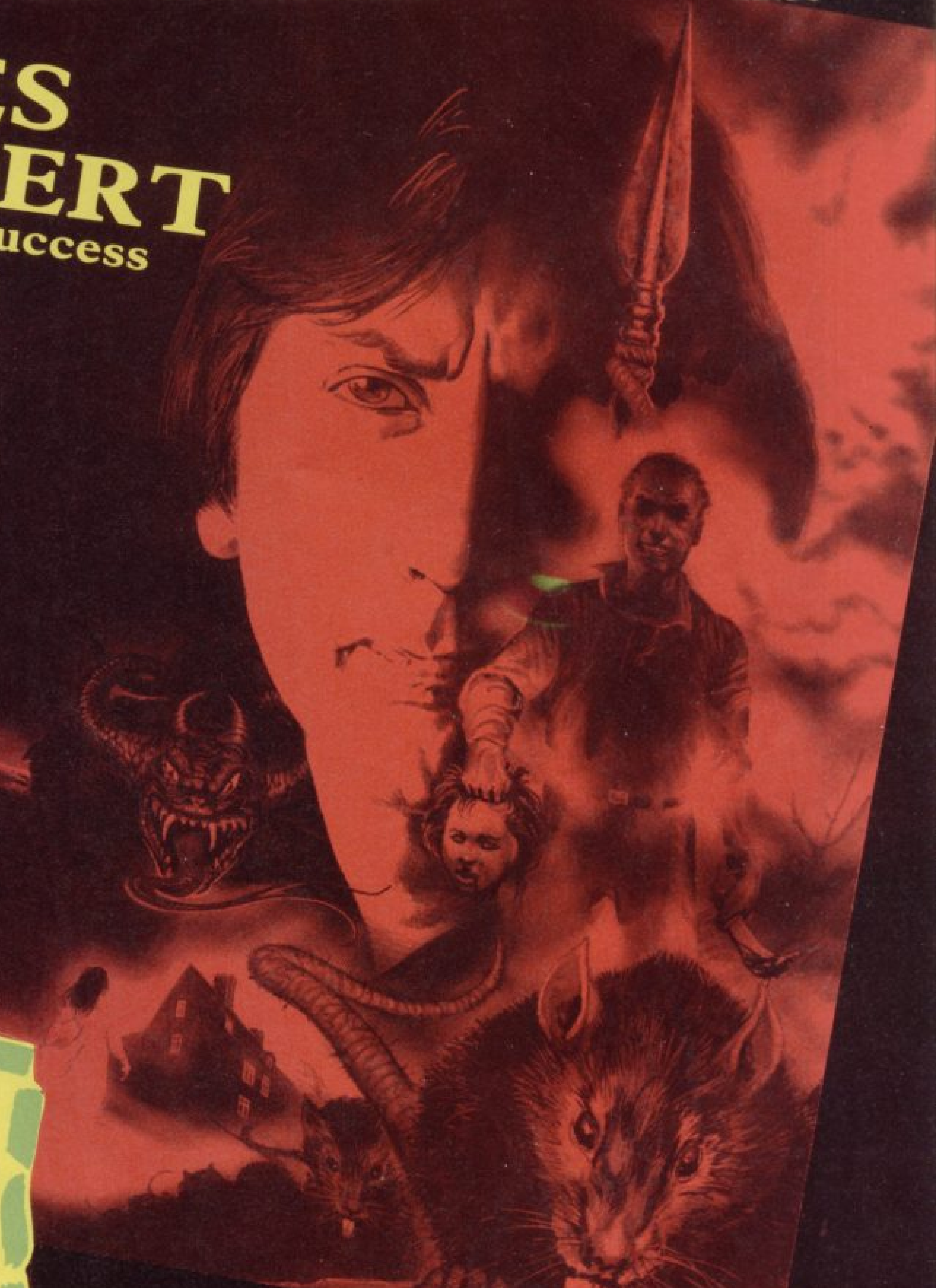
In principle the simplicity of this system is very appealing, but in practice it doesn't work as well as it should. Only a few examples are given to aid in assigning difficulty numbers and the like, which makes life difficult until the referee has had a fair amount of practice with the system.

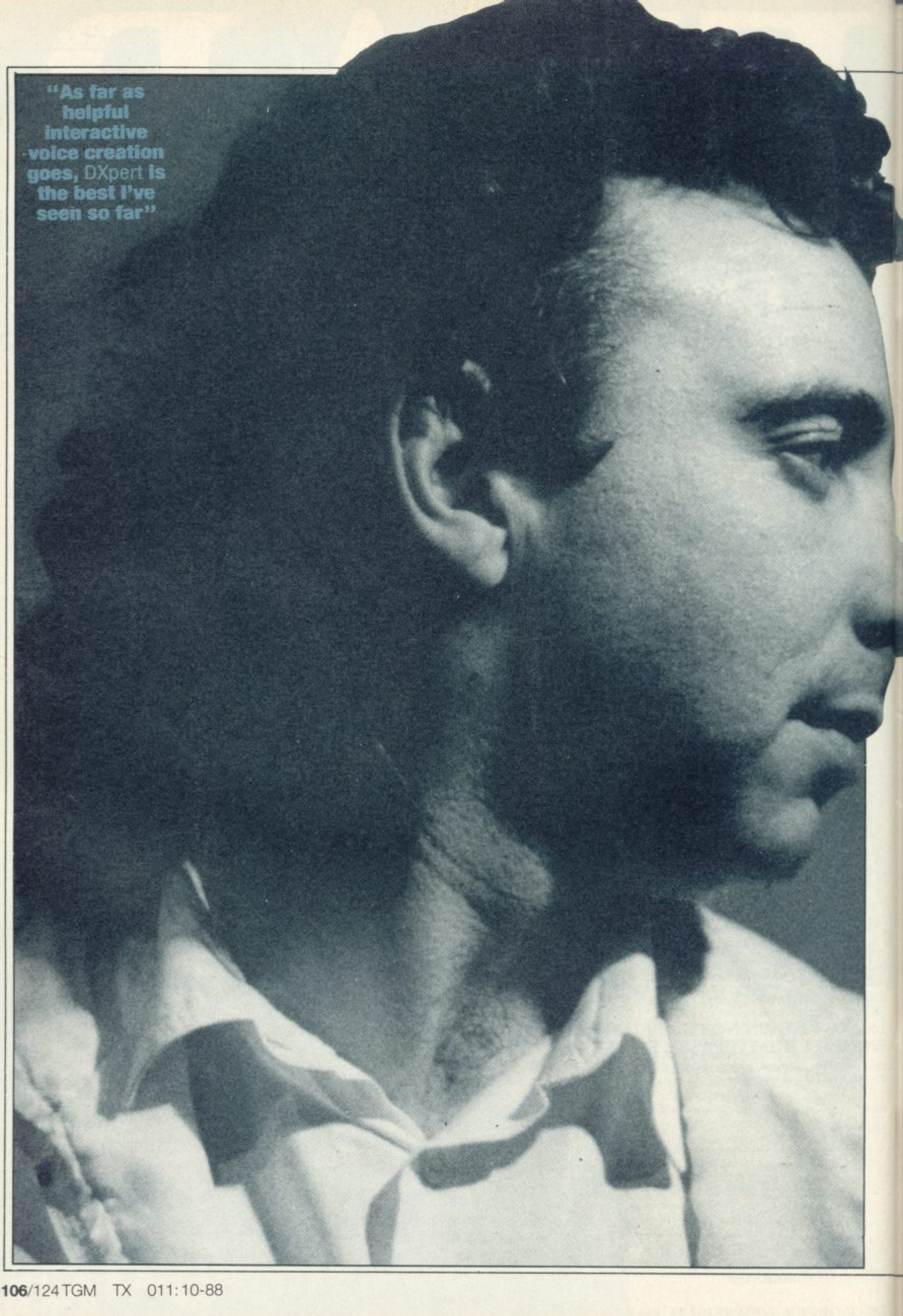
Admittedly the pre–written adventure supplements do provide their own Task description at the relevant points, which serve as useful guidelines, but referees trying to make do with just the basic set will have difficulties. The situation could have been improved drastically with just a few more examples and a better introductory scenario. The one included with the set – *The Tricolor's Shadow* – is sketchy in the extreme.

In summary, GDW have produced an excellent and entertaining universe for near–future star-hopping adventure. With the various supplements available, the *Traveller 2300* world is as well-detailed and as much fun as any you can play. But its rules system is something of a let–down.

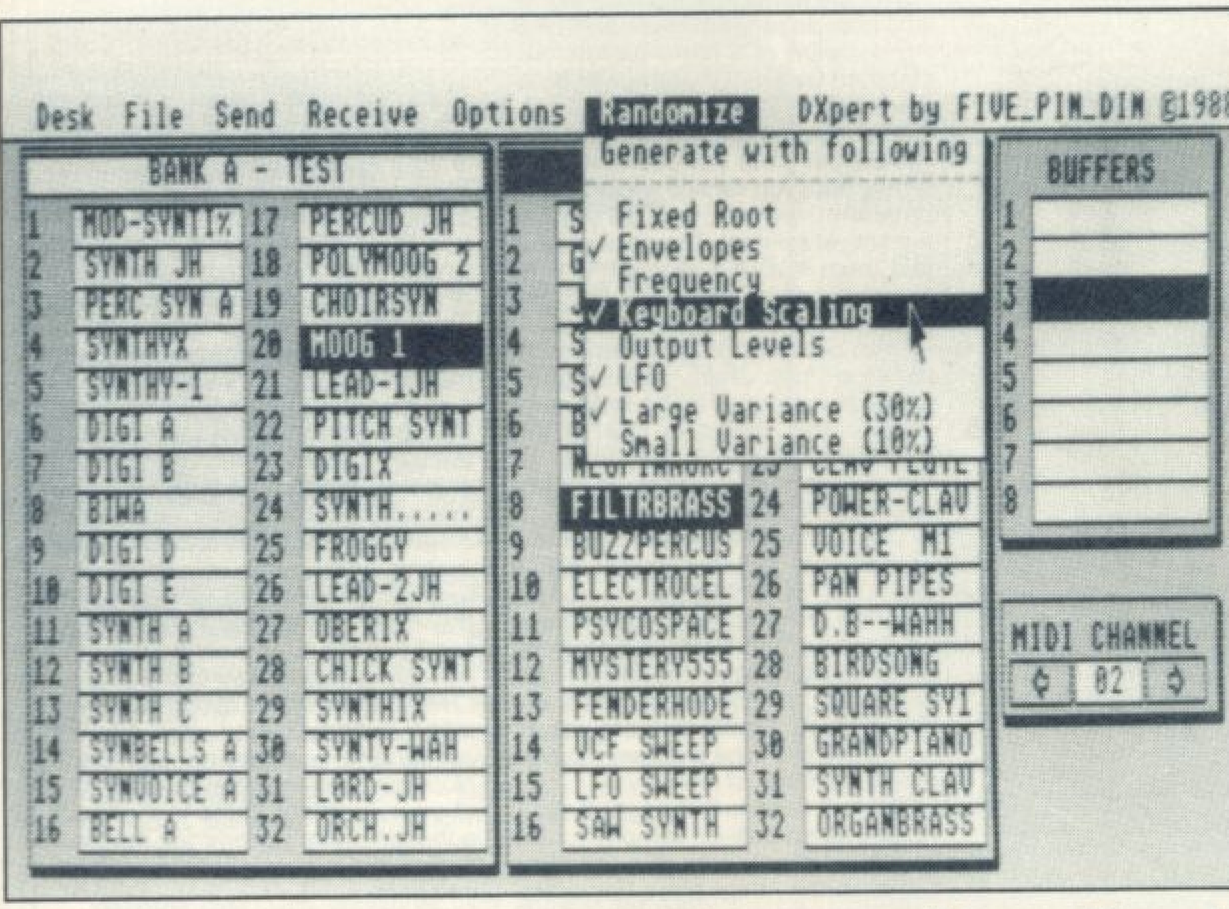
The system is unconventional in that it lays much of the burden of deciding the effects of various player skills on the referee, without really providing sufficient examples or guidelines. Nevertheless, the wealth of detail and the appeal of the setting make it well worth a look to experienced roleplayers who don't mind putting in a little effort to flesh-out the rules system.






"As far as helpful interactive voice creation goes, DXpert is the best I've seen so far"

MUSIC MATTERS



The ability to randomise keyboard scaling is one of DXpert's unique features

After the past two month's rolling in Archimedes software and revelling in the delights of MSX, Jon Bates returns to the Atari ST for further fun and frolics: there's a disk-based music magazine, yet another DX7 programmer and a few of your letters

Music Matrix is a new disk-based music magazine, and I'm looking at that first. The concept is that since the ST has the MIDI ports on board, you can run a disk that contains not only articles which help and inform you to program music on the ST, but also contains some free public domain software and many other utilities that will be useful to music freaks.

The first thing you need, however, is at least one synthesizer/MIDI keyboard hooked up to the ST. Obviously it doesn't concern itself with the internal chip. One of the problems in running a magazine such as this is that you could get too specific as regards the equipment you are setting up the program to run on.

Although *Music Matrix* does contain some quite specific programs and files for specific sequences in Issue 1, they have maintained a fairly central path and managed to throw in songs (all original to avoid copyright problems) and information.

> **"Music Matrix welcomes input from TGM readers . . . articles, songfiles, queries etc"**

As a rough breakdown, with Issue 1 you get a fastbasic program along with half a dozen or so music-related fastbasic files. There's a song file that runs on **Kuma**'s *K–Minstrel* (reviewed in TGM **003**). Not the most popular of sequencers, but nevertheless a low-budget package. A real bonus is represented by an all-talking, singing and dancing 32-track MIDI sequencer, which is from public domain but nevertheless quite a sophisticated piece of software. It saves and retrieves the songs you create, along with a fair degree of editing and quantization facilities.

There's also a selection of music stuff written in ST basic programs. If you own the *Michtron Super Conductor* (reviewed in TGM **003**), there are two songfiles also contained on the disk. There is also a tutorial on the first simple steps to program the ST to output MIDI commands and notes.

Music Matrix is definitely for the novice, and as such is very useful. Its authors recommend that you use a Roland MT32 sound module to get the best out of the programs contained therein. However, I would take a rough guess and say that any of the B-channel tone modules would do, provided you sort the voices out to suit. One small problem was that the graphics and associated pages would not run on the hi–res screen, which is a shame – they are in colour and run on a TV or medium resolution screen.

Music Matrix welcomes any input from TGM readers. They are willing to accept articles, songfiles, queries etc. Oh yes. They are also very willing to take your subscriptions, which cost £35 per annum. It's issued quarterly at present, but hopefully this will become a more frequent occurrence when circulation figures allow.

Issue 2 which is available now, contains an MT32 editor, and songfiles for the Steinberg Pro 24 sequencer. Their address and contact number is at the end of this article.

More DX-ing

Yet another DX7 editor!! The world is brimming with them.

Actually the *DXpert* is a pretty good deal being rather similar in concept to the voice programming packages I've reviewed in previous articles.

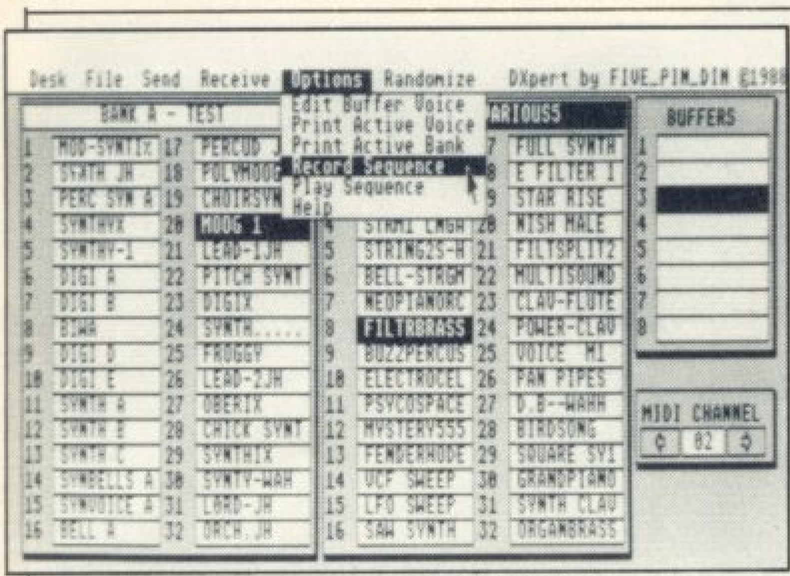
All the expected functions are here – file save, bulk load and bulk save, single voice load and save. It will hold on screen two banks of sounds, and you click on the particular one that you wish active.

To edit a voice you drag the selected sound to the edit buffer – it also holds up to six voices in the separate edit buffers. Editing follows the normal routine of a screen full of numbers which you can click on to alter.

However, it also has the 'tuggable' graphs, which are optional for each operator envelope. This gives you a screen of a graph with points that can be pulled around to shape up the sound. When you jump to the next operator it retains a shadow of the previous operator envelope so that you can keep track of what you are doing. Mind you, after about five graphs appear in shadow form on the same screen, it becomes a bit confusing working out which one is which.

Where *DXpert* really scores is the ability to randomise sounds. Usually this is found on the £100-plus programs, and was first seen on the mother of all DX voicing programs – *DX Droid*, which costs about £180.

Randomise means that by selecting that option from the menu it runs through the peripherals within certain predetermined guidelines and creates the basis for new sounds for you to tweak up. It generates 32 variations of the sound chosen as a basis. Don't do



DXpert *allows you to test your sound with its built-in sequencer*

what I did; make sure that the on-screen voice bank has been saved before you overwrite it with the randomised voices.

DXpert goes a little bit further in that you can to some extent define the basis on which it will randomise the sound. You can choose to keep the basic sound, alter the operator envelopes only, randomise the basic frequency, randomise the keyboard scaling, the output levels or the low frequency oscillator. You also have the choice of either two ranges of randomisation – either 10% or 30%.

As far as helpful interactive voice creation with assistance from the computer goes, this is the best I've seen so far. It certainly gets my vote for £24.99. The voices dumped are also compatible with the Steinberg *Pro24* dump utility. A begging letter to Five Pin Din software (address at the end), who are the authors of this program, will get you a copy of the demo version.

MUSICAL NOTES

Thanks for the mail. Not that I'm trying to outshine Robin Hogg and the excellent Information Desk, you understand. I have just picked out a few letters that hopefully will save a few head scratching sessions.

Several people have written regarding the Amiga and its MIDI possibilities. **Jeremy Lyons** from Holywood in Co Down, is a little confused with the Yamaha PSR6300 via a Datel MIDI interface. So far he is only able to gain access to the keynote data and volume (I think you mean velocity, Jeremy – volume is a separate control feature).

He would also like to know of a program which will enable him to enter music in score form and control the function of the instrument directly. Lastly, he finds he can send clock pulses from the DMCS but not receive them.

Firstly, the *Deluxe Music Construction Set* is not intended as a full-blown sequencer but as a semi–serious fun package. Secondly, the Yamaha PSR series will allow you access to their more exclusive innards, but only if you press the MIDI button on the panel, along with a combination of other panel buttons.

"It would be no use buying an extremely complex program to find your keyboard skills are not worthy of it"

You would need to read the handbook carefully to engage the different transmission modes that the instrument uses; ie clock pulses. As you observe, the *DMCS* will not receive clock pulses.

As to what program you should get: at this point let's bring in **Allister Brimble** from Crediton in Devon, who has recently purchased the Amiga 500 and is desperate for software. He also wants a sampler for the Amiga. At present software for the Amiga is not exactly thick on the ground, and the majority of it is transatlantic.

However I am currently trying to get hold of some, either directly from the software houses, or from the the few importers who have started to do Amiga software. Companies to look out for are **Mimetics** and **New Wave**, who both do suites of music sequencing software of a more professional standard that will enable you to do all the things you require.

You could try ordering from the States, but there will obviously be a lack of back–up service should things go wrong. However, importers for this are not yet existent. The good news is that there is a *Dr T* program already available called *KCS 1.6*, which will set you back £225.

Even better is the basic sequencer package from them, called *MRS*, which is rumoured to be retailing at £49.95. This should be out as this issue hits the stands. As should be two programs from **Passport** – *Mastercracks Pro* and *Junior*.

The former is again an expensive professional job, but *Junior* has a price tag of £99.95. Don't forget, potential Amiga owners, you will need an interface, and TGM will be looking at Amiga interfaces in the not-too-distant future, checking on prices and compatibilty. Remember as well, to check and see if the program requires more than 500K of memory.

The bad news is that as yet there is no dedicated bolt–on sampler for the Amiga available in this country. Although the Amiga plays back samples, these have usually been created on a dedicated machine, converted and downloaded into the running program.

Oddly enough as I am typing this (in the remotest part of West Wales) the phone chirps into life and it would seem that the Amiga version of the *Dr T* software will have a routine to download MIDI sample dumps into the Amiga and play them back via the Amiga's internal sound chip. As soon as there's any dedicated sampling hard and software available, I'll be giving you the details.

Anyone interested in the programs mentioned above could try contacting Stuart West of 2001 in Ash, Surrey who will be very pleased to dispatch these to you tout suite.

Lots of mail from Commodore owners regarding available software and what to get.

M Hafeji, from Batley in West Yorkshire, wants to know what the best MIDI software available is.

First of all you need to decide on your price, not forgetting that you need an interface. If you want to be reasonably serious about the whole affair, you also need an instrument or synthesizer capable of responding to more than one MIDI channel.

M Hafeji also mentions the Steinberg *Pro 24*. This program unfortunately is only designed for the Atari ST, but it's predecessor, the *Pro 16*, is still about for the C64 at about £99. However, because of the dwindling sales of music software for the C64, you could pick up quite a bargain if you shop around.

Bear in mind your own capabilities. It would be no use buying an extremely complex program to find that your keyboard skills are simply not worthy of it. On the other hand if you're fairly adept with the old digits, it would be of little point getting an introductory 'fun' package – great for amusement, but not really cut out for the more serious-minded user.

If I had to produce a hit list it might run something like this:

Advanced Music System	Island/Firebird
Joreth Music Packages	Joreth
Sonus sequencers	Sonus
Steinberg Pro 16	*Steinberg*

For elucidation on this point you could thumb through the Christmas 87 edition of our sister magazine ZZAP!, in which yours truly did a full race survey of Commodore music soft- and hardware. Most of these programs will be around if you look hard enough though.

In that survey I also looked at the Sound Expander which was marketed through Boots amongst others. ***Matthew Walton*** *wrote asking where the additional software was which could program its voices. The original system, which came complete with a five–octave keyboard was marketed by Music Sales. They'll be happy to send you the editing software for the princely sum of £29.95*

Next month *I'll be taking a look at a mega expensive and ultra efficient sequencing and scoring package – Notator* – and answering a few more of your questions (write to the usual address). I can't guarantee personal replies, but the best of the bunch gets into print.

If you're wondering what happened to the review of *M*, the composition program, well the truth is the review copy failed to work at all, and unfortunately I was unable to get hold of an unscrambled version in time to do it justice. Soon.

Make a special note that next month's issue of TGM has a music supplement – an eight-page special, bulging with information about keyboards, modules, drum machines – all at the low-budget end of the market to fit your pocket. Plus a unique cassette offer (plug plug). It contains an hour's worth of music especially created by my goodself, using much of the equipment reviewed in the past and present, both in the supplement and this column. A detailed blow by blow description of how each piece was written, assembled and recorded will also be included in the supplement. (OK, enough trumpet blowing, now shut up –Ed.)

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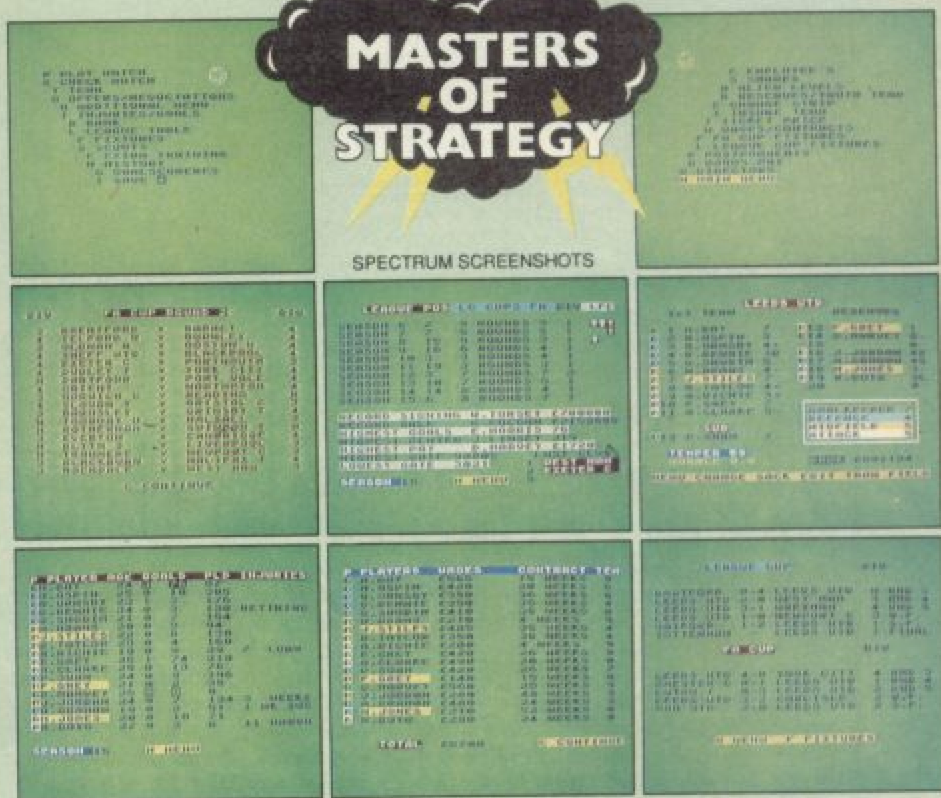
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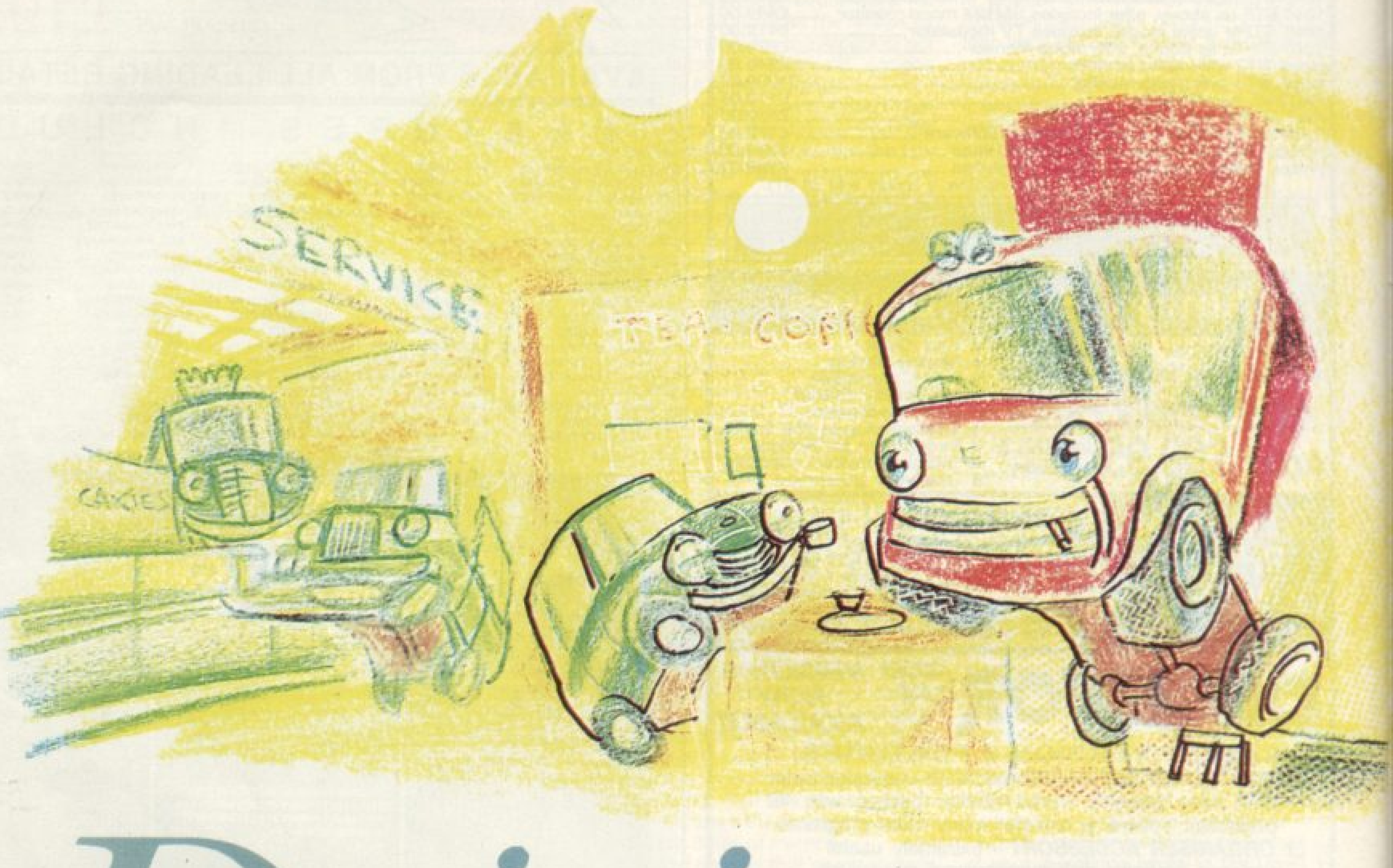
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Vehicles will communicate without help from humans . . .



Driving us

Henry Ford once boasted that you could have a car in any colour, as long as it was black. Mel Croucher knows that's all changed – now you can have a car in any colour, as long as it bleeps

Designed by computer. Built by robots. Driven by morons'. That's the way it looks at the moment for the motorist. But anyone under the age of 13 may never know the joys of running out of fuel, losing their direction, being stuck in a traffic jam, having their car nicked or getting smashed to a pulp in a multiple pile–up.

Before they are old enough to take their driving test, hi–tech gismos will become standard features on the humble motor car. During the next five years, on–board computers will be transforming motorway madness into something more like an arcade game. The next generation of cars is on the drawing board, and some of the sci–fi gadgets are already with us.

Testing, testing

Everyone reading this will have played a racing or a flight simulation at some time, in the arcades or on a home micro. And several driving schools have nicked the idea and equipped themselves with drive–sims, complete with cartoon–style roadways on video, a steering wheel, pedals and naff sound effects. They're all but useless for learning how to drive the real thing.

If anyone wants to make a small fortune, go out and video several hours of simulated driving tests (not forgetting a backward facing camera for your rear–view mirror). Then go home and conjure up some computer-generated cyclists, lollipop ladies, stray dogs, traffic lights, and similar inconveniences. Now plonk the whole lot onto a bog standard CD–ROM and program genuine sound effects, weather conditions, speeds, braking distances and the random element.

Next, sell the whole package off to the British School of Motoring, and send me a small royalty. Don't forget the self–testing Highway Code option – the bit where you go hopping along

"The next generation of cars is on the drawing board, and the sci–fi gadgets are with us"

crazy

like an asthmatic rabbit when you foul up the clutch release, and the final computer print–out showing why you just failed your test (including body count, where appropriate).

False starts

I've got a weeny computer read–out on the dashboard of my present (clapped out) motor.

It's manufactured by an oriental outfit named Sato. If I tell it things like how far my current destination is from home, it will check the time, fuel, temperature, horoscope etc, and tell me what time I will arrive, how many miles I am getting to the gallon, when to fill up with four star, and even how this trip is going compared to the last one I made.

Trouble is that during a recent drive down to Spain, it assured me that I was getting 8,256 miles to the gallon and arriving at 0000 o'clock.

Dashboard computers that actually work properly *do* exist, but there have been teething troubles. Who can forget the launch of the MG Maestro in April 1984? More to the point, who would like to forget it! A computerised voice, chillingly like Margaret Thatcher at her most patronising, lectured the hapless driver about seat belts, empty tanks and personal hygiene, but at least the computer read–out worked better than mine.

The 1983 Audi Quattro had a talking safety check system that sounded more like a high–class hooker, who managed to offend so many drivers that she was replaced by a liquid crystal display in 1987. But talking cars are coming, like it or not. Codenamed 'Prometheus', and developed by Fiat in cahoots with a huge consortium including Renault, Saab, Daimler–Benz, Porsche and BMW, the in–car supercomputer will be hitting the road next year.

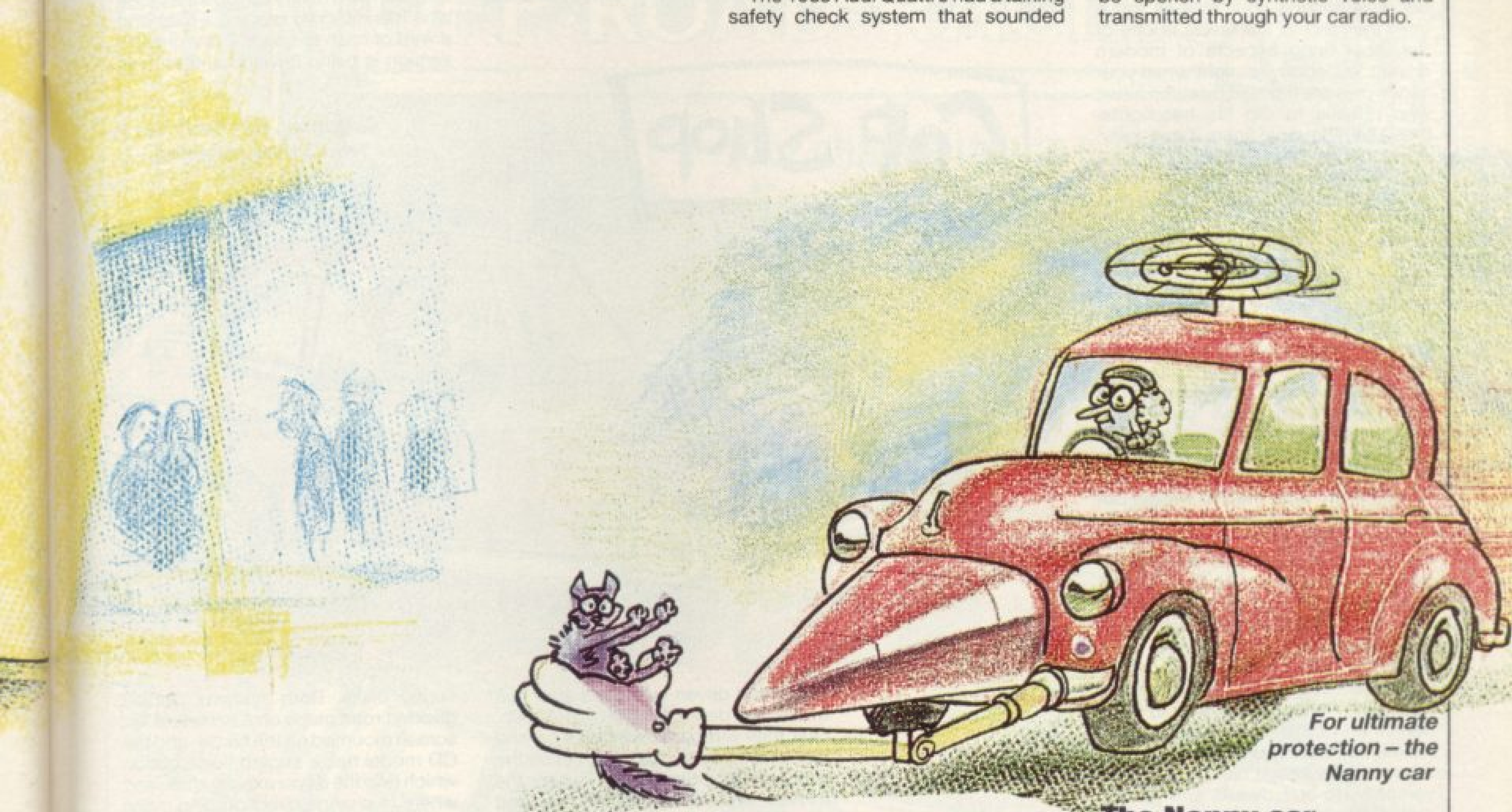
Promethean

I suppose Fiat have named their electronic baby Prometheus because he was the Greek Titan who made a cyberman out of clay, and taught men how to use fire (which he had nicked from the chief gods on Mount Olympus). Unfortunately, Prometheus ended up chained to a rock with an eagle ripping out his liver – a fact which Fiat seem to have overlooked.

"A computerised voice, chillingly like Margaret Thatcher, lectured the hapless driver about seat belts"

Anyway, the Prometheus computerised communication system allows cars to exchange information with each other, but without any assistance from their human drivers. If there's a heavy load up ahead, or a bank robbery taking place, or a three-mile traffic jam of holidaymakers, or specially planned inconvenient roadworks, or a blazing oil tanker, or worse still, one of those doddering old fools driving a Humber Sceptre in the fast lane at 40 mph, your Prometheus will be warned by an on–board Prometheus in another car travelling in the opposite direction.

In addition to this, information can be fed into the system by the AA, RAC, CIA etc. via road sensors every few hundred metres, fed by satellite. This information will cover everything from floods to parking spaces, and advise the driver where to turn off to avoid the hazards up ahead. The advice will be spoken by synthetic voice and transmitted through your car radio.



For ultimate protection – the Nanny car

The Nanny car

Pioneered by the Japanese, closely followed by the Americans, Germans and Swedes, the computerised Nanny Car will protect the stupidest of drivers. If you insist on driving into brick walls, an air bag pops out from the steering column within a few milliseconds, and cradles your head and torso against the impact.

If you can't remember how to put air in your tyres, water in your radiator or oil in your sump, Nanny will gradually slow you down and warn you that the vehicle will crash/overheat/explode unless you treat it with more consideration. If you try and squash the neighbour's baby while reversing, Nanny will buzz like a swarm of bees and flash like a swarm of raincoats. This is achieved by radar, which detects any object more than six inches off the ground, weighing more than two pounds and within a range of three meters from your rear bumper. The whole Nanny package adds around £250 to the cost of the car. For an additional hundred, you can hand over control of your lights and windscreen wipers to Nanny's electronic sensors too.

Virtual image displays

There's a town in Indiana, USA, with the unlikely name of Kokomo, where

PRESS ANY KEY

General Motors are playing with an interesting toy which will be appearing in a limited number of production models within the next five years. The Virtual Image Display shows a conventional lay–out of dashboard dials and digits, but they appear to be two metres away, down a little tunnel.

Like the best conjuring tricks, this is all done by mirrors, curved in neat little parabolas, and the driver views the illusion of an instrument panel instead of the panel itself.

The idea is not as daft as it sounds, because shifting your eyeball focus from the road to the fascia is one of the most tiring aspects of modern driving, especially at night when your mince pies are frazzled by some nitwit who refuses to dip his headlights. (Yes, self–dipping lights have been developed!) The VID system only costs 50 dollars, and not only looks good but is a definite aid to safer driving.

Head–up displays

Alternatively, and for an extra hundred dollars on the price of your new car, General Motors have got a real treat in store. In 1992 it is planned to fit Head–Up Displays (HUD – remember your flight sims?) on mass production models, including the humble British Vauxhall. No self–respecting yuppie will want to be without a HUD, which does exactly what the VID will do, but in spectacular fashion.

The idea comes from the cockpit of fighter–bombers, where pilots must keep their heads up while checking their instruments, or risk pulling the eyes out of their sockets with rapid focussing. The HUD projects the car's speed digitally on the windscreen, but the numbers appear to be just beyond where the bonnet badge would have been if only those bloody kids hadn't nicked it to wear round their rotten little necks. Its image can be adjusted vertically, to suit dwarfs and giants, and HUD also projects warnings for low fuel, unhappy engines and uncancelled direction indicators. Unlike the Virtual Image Display, HUD is definitely a gimmick, which does not replace conventional displays, but is in addition to them, and the driver has the option to switch it off.

'Ello, 'ello, 'ello

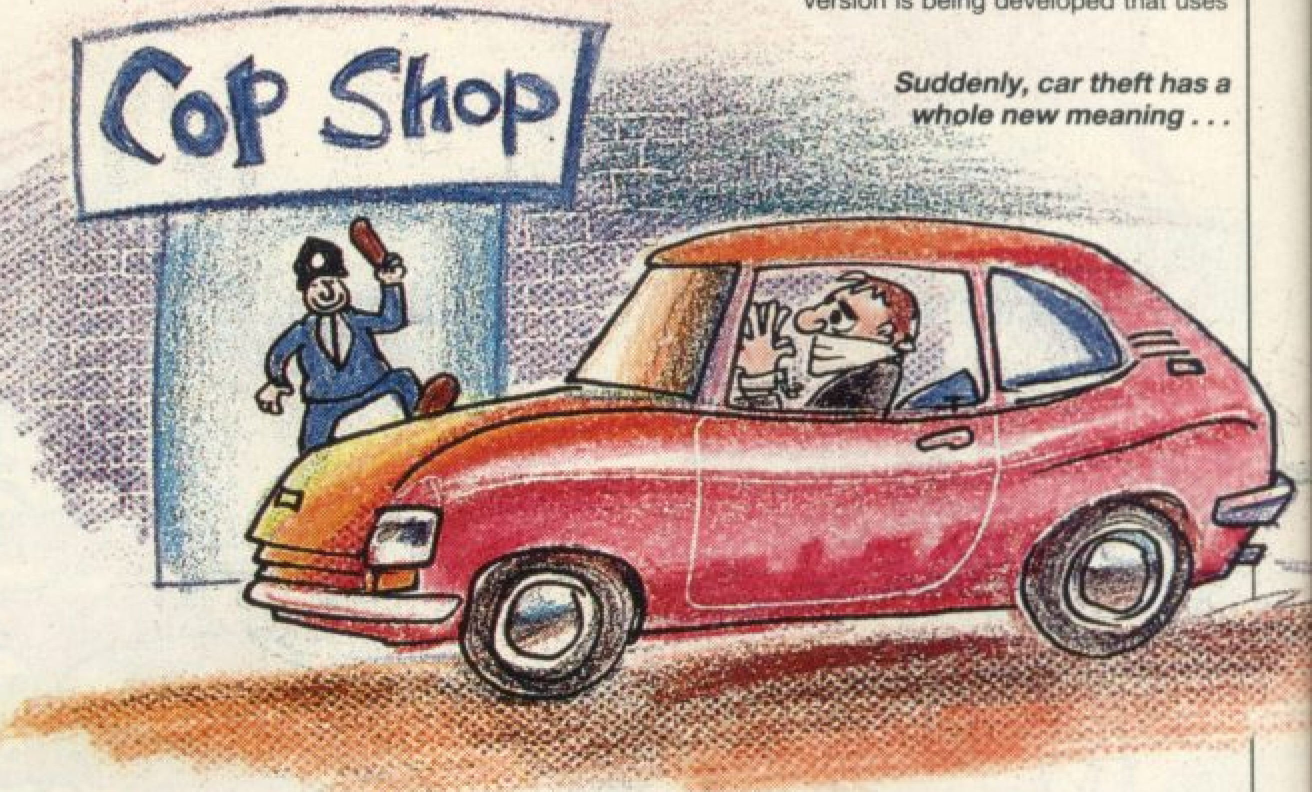
Certain manufacturers like BMW and Volvo fit burglar alarms as standard kit to several of their models, and chunky profits are made by companies who flog alarms, steering wheels locks, hand–break clamps, ignition disablers and all the other next–to useless devices which professional car thieves scoff at. But for 50 dollars on the price of the car, the E–KEY system really does work.

Activated in much the same way as video remote controls and today's electronic keys – which lock and unlock your vehicle with a wave and a flick of a weeny plastic box – E–Key talks to the car's computer and tells it that you are friend and not foe. Not only does it lock/unlock all the doors, boot and bonnet, it will also adjust the mirrors, seats and steering column, from its memory, to suit individually preprogrammed drivers.

To beat the thief, E–Key continually sends out electronic sensors, and if it doesn't detect any electrical happenings inside the car for longer than 30 seconds, it goes into secure mode. The fuel supply is isolated, the starter gets cut off, and any tamperings without the correct electronic key will result in a deafening scream from the system.

"These wicked motors happily allow themselves to be stolen and driven away"

For the really vindictive members of the Law and Order brigade, there are vehicles which don't deter theft, they positively welcome it! These wicked motors happily allow themselves to be



Suddenly, car theft has a whole new meaning . . .

stolen and driven away, but after half a mile they develop a will of their own. First they wind their windows up and lock all the doors. Next they cut off the fuel and ignition. Finally, when the thieves are nicely bottled up and stranded, the horn begins to blare and the headlights flash in joy and delight.

Calling all cars

In TGM **006** I previewed the RDS (Radio Data System) which is coming on stream this year. Its application will be vital for the next generation of computerised motorists. Traffic announcements will automatically override the driver's selected station thanks to the RDS system, as well as an option for continual reports on local traffic information. By 1993, an extra £85 will not only buy the driver these RDS goodies, but also include a voice–activated control system for radio and car phone. Up to 40 preprogrammed telephone numbers or radio stations can be recognised by the voice analyser, and instead of the harassed driver fiddling around with push–button dials and knobs while going the wrong way round a motorway junction and adjusting the graphic equaliser, simple verbal instructions like 'phone home' and 'tune Radio Four' will achieve the desired result. A synthetic voice chip is included in the package, featuring responses such as 'please repeat instruction', 'dialling number' and 'searching'.

Route sexty–sex

By now most TGM readers will have heard about sexy on–board navigation systems, using CD–ROM and a dashboard map display. Large versions of this system are already operating in many UK service stations, where a driver can dial up a print–out of any desired route in the UK, complete with the latest information on the weather, road conditions, accident black spots and road works.

CD–ROM–generated route finders will soon be a luxury option for anyone who has difficulty reading a map and a wad of cash to spare. But a cheapo version is being developed that uses floppy disks. Both systems display gridded road maps on a miniature flat screen mounted on the fascia, and the CD model has a superb voice option which tells the driver exactly when and where to change direction, and make turns.

Is there anybody out there?

Maybe the most ironic aspect of computerised cars is the fact that as they become common, the 1990s will see the beginning of the end of rush hours and daily trips to the office, shops and school. Home computer terminals and portables are already allowing people like me to work anywhere, any time. And electronic shopping, banking, conferencing – and the like – will free whole sections of the workforce from the chore of unnecessary travel, from weekly shopping to daily commuting.

The long lost concept of 'driving for pleasure' will certainly reappear, but although computerised driving will be safe, it will also become sterile and boring. Even the humble Montego of 1988 has two on–board computers monitoring performance six hundred times a second. The day will surely come when we hark back with affection and nostalgia to the time when we could run out of petrol, get lost and run over a hedgehog without some omnipotent robot slapping our wrists and driving us to the nearest Social Re–education centre. Beep! Beep!


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C64 cass games for sale, 5 for £5. Send SAE for details to Mike, 61, Riverview Close, Hallow Road, Worcester WR2 6DB.

Printer for sale – CBM MPS 1200, only 3 months old: still in original box. NLQ and draft modes, comes with 3 extra ribbons. £120 ono. Phone: Maidenhead 34362.

Commodore C64 for sale, with Excellerator disk drive, datasette, Backup cartridge plus special Parameter disks, Sampler, Com Drum, Advanced Music System and loads of disks and tapes worth £760. All boxed as new £350. Chris 5428242.

Sega System, excellent condition, 8 games including Out Run, Rocky, My Hero, Global Defence, Choplifter etc. All this just for £75. Tel: 01 278 4691.

Atari ST software for sale. Pawn, Degas Elite, Xenon, Ballyhoo (Infocom), Enduro Racer. £12 each or only £55 the lot!! First come first served. Send SAE and PO/Cheque to: – M. Pease, 103 Nursery Close, Hellesdon, Norwich NR6 5SL.

Atari 520 STFM (only 4 months old), over £150 of software including Gauntlet II, Virus etc., still under guarantee, £275. Genuine reason for sale. Ring Alan on (0373) 826210 after 7pm.

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Atari 800XL, two 1050 drives, one with Happy chip, also data recorder and 1027 printer (needs repair), over 100 disks and some tape software. All boxed with manuals £300 ono. Call Jez on 0382 542737.

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SWAPLINE

Amiga, having just updated to, I'd like to hear from anyone interested in strategy and wargaming. Need advice on good games and availabilty, like to swap. Write to Martyn, 39 Ty-Mawr Road, Rumney, Cardiff CF3 8BS.

Swap or sell Spectrum 128K, many games, Interface 1, Microdrive, tape recorder, joystick, 2 printers for CPC 664, CPC 6128 or CPC 464 and DDI1 disk drive, or £325. Ring (0359) 30426 and ask for Thomas.

PEN PALS

Amiga owner wants to contact other Amiga freaks from all around the world. I promise to answer all letters. Write to me: Paul Owen, 78 Powrie Street, Glenfield, Auckland 10, New Zealand.

Amiga contacts wanted around the world – write to Andrew, 56 Elm House, Prescot, Merseyside L34 3LZ, or phone (051) 426 9151 eve. 100% reply – honest! Also – massive C-64 system for sale worth over £1000 – offers.

Amiga contacts wanted from anywhere, all letters answered, send lists to: Mike, 61 Riverview Close, Hallow Road, Worcester WR2 6DB.

Amiga contacts wanted urgently to swop programs, hints etc. Anyone anywhere write to me, guaranteed reply – Jon, 3 Gardens Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside L63 7QZ.

ST and Amiga freaks! We want contacts all over the world. For ST write to: Black Flame, Uspv.5, 3340 Aamot, Norway. For Amiga write to: Rune Thorud, BakkeLokka, 3340 Aamot, Norway.

Atari ST and Amiga contacts wanted from anywhere in the world, prompt reply guaranteed. Write to Jake, 14 St. Josephs Tce, Mell, Drogheda, Co. Louth, Eire or phone 041 35719.

Dutch Amiga fans are looking for international contacts. Everyone welcome, overseas prefered. Answer 100%. Listing or disk to Chyropractorsoft, PO Box 551, 2140 AN Hoofddap, Holland attn Arthur. Also looking for Eastern European contacts!!!

Amiga Penpals wanted from all over the world. Write to Chris Gin, 154 Panama Road, Otahuhu, Auckland, New Zealand. Must write regularly. All letters replied to. First in, First served.

Amiga Pen Pals wanted from all over the world. Write to Martyn Jones, 12 Brynawel Tce, Cwmllynfell, Swansea, S.Wales SA9 2YT, UK.

Norwegian Atari ST user wants pen pals from all over the world. I will answer all letters. Write to Boye Bjorklund, Pettersberga 9, 3340 Aamot, Norway.

Atari ST user wishes to swap hints, tips etc. with other users world wide. Tel: 0622 61917 or write to Ian Beevis, 13 Leicester Road, Shepway, Maidstone, Kent ME15 7QA. Now!

Amiga owner wants to contact other Amiga freaks from all around the world. I promise to answer all letters. Write to me: Paul Owen, 78 Powrie Street, Glenfield, Auckland 10, New Zealand.

Amiga User wants Amiga pen pals and contacts from all over the world. Guaranteed reply. Write to David Carlin, PO Box 12-814, Penrose 5, Auckland, New Zealand.

Amiga £ C64 owner wants penpals worldwide to exchange hints etc. All letters guaranteed reply. Write to: Andrew Cheung, 12 New Street, Donaghadee, Co Down, N. Ireland BT21 0AG, or phone 0247 882124 after 4pm.

Amiga User would like Penpals from all over the world. Also have C64. I will guarantee a reply. If interested write to: Jeff Cook, 45 Westbury St, Laisterdyke, Bradford BD4 8PB, W.Yorks

CBM 64 owner with tape and disk wants a pen pal form anywhere in the world or England preferably male and over 15. Write to Tony Quansah, 1 Batley Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 0AA, England.

Wanna get more hot Amiga stuff? Just write to the fastest Amiga team in Finland. Antti Hacklin, Vesaisenkatv 10, 95400 Tornio, Finland or call 358 698 42115. PS: No ugly lamers!!!

Atari ST pen pals wanted worldwide. All letters get replies. Write to: Steven Baugh, 53 Green Lane, Leamore, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 2BN.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap tips, games etc. Phone Carl on (0492) 82737 or write to Carl, 15 The Meadows, Llandudno Junction, Gwynedd LL31 9LP. All letters answered if SAE enclosed. Don't stand there, DO IT!

Norwegian Atari ST user wants pen pals from all over the world. I will answer all letters. Write to: Boye Bjoerklund, Pettersberga 9, 3340 Aamot, Norway.

Wanted Amiga contacts to swap games and tips anything at all write or telephone: Steve, 8 Talke Road, Chesterton, Newcastle, Staffs. ST5 7NH, (0782) 562052.

USER GROUPS

MSX – NEED a MSX Club? Then why not join one of the UK's biggest MSX Clubs. Overseas members welcome. For information sen SAE to: MSX CENTRAL, 14 The Wardens Ave, Allesley, Coventry CV5 9GJ, England.

WE NEED MEMBERS who live in the Essex area to join Computer Club. All computers included. To find out more, please send an SAE to: P. Downey, Fairbanks, School Lane, Great Leighs, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 1NL.

ATARI ST – USER GROUP with the best games and tips around. 'You name it, we've got it'. – Phone or write/visit: 41 Bennett Rd, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex. Tel: 599 6521 Ask for Shane (after 6pm).

Amicable Amiga Club would like to hear from all Amiga users to start User Group. Write to Onn Lee, 125 Arnold Road, Bestwood Estate, Notts NG5 5HR. All letters answered.

Free membership to an amazing Spectrum Club. Don't miss your chance to join. Send SAE to S.C.(GM), D Hadfield, 8 Brookside Close, Godley, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2QQ.

Software to sell/wanted? Try our sales/library scheme. Plus loads more funtastic attractions. SAE brings free 26 page newsletter. Chic Computer Club, 28 Criss Grove, Gerrards Cross, Bucks. SL9 9HQ. You won't be disappointed!!

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ADVENTURE!!!! 'SOOTHSAYER' is a 48 page monthly mag, packed with solutions, maps, news, helplines and much more!! Send £1.25 for sample copy to: J R Barnsley, 32 Merrivale Rd, Rising Brook, Stafford ST17 9EB.

ICEWORLD, the new Dr Who fanzine is out. Issues 1,2,3,4 available now. Interviews, reviews, competitions, merchandise, news, books etc. Issue 5 out July 2nd. £1.20 inc P/P. Mark Short, 3 Daneway Gardens, Leiston, Suffolk IP16 4XA

ISSUE 1 OF ULTRABYTE FANZINE OUT NOW! Reviews, charts, previews, compos and a letter page plus more on cassette. Send SAE and also send 90p plus 30p P&P to ULTRABYTE FANZINE, 24 Souillac Drive, Denny, Scotland.

SPECTRE – New fanzine for Speccy reviews, PBM's, videos, tips and more. To buy this crucial fanzine (A4 size) send 35p and SAE to: Jonathan Bell, 26 Chaffers Mead, Ashtead, Surrey KT21 1NG. Tel: Ashtead 72919.

MSX GAZETTE at least 25 pages each month. £1 trial issue, £12 yearly membership. Cheques, postal orders. Robert Wilson, 47 Reedswood Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 8DW. Tel: (0424) 714116 after 4pm. Payment to MSX GAZETTE.

Atari ST support for magazine (fanzine) which concentrates on this amazing machine. Also, offering many services including: cheap original software, free gifts, news, reviews, etc. Interested? Send stamp to: Jonathan Lee, 11 Bradshaw Close, Barnsley S75 2JN. Thanks!

STIGMA, the fanzine for ATARI ST games players. Loads of current games reviewed, charts, compo's, etc. Send 50p and large SAE or 80p to: STIGMA, 37 Gainsborough Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 2XG.

MISCELLANEOUS

Goal Crazy computer-moderated soccer PBM. Player ratings (performance in each game and overall), Internationals, training options, tactic choices, European cups, monthly awards, transfers, tournaments. For details: SAE – George Crozier, Hazelmount, Pant, Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 9QQ.

Music disks available for all Amiga music fans. Each disk contains 16 scores of the highest possible quality. Send £2.00 plus blank disk to Allister at . . . Hill House, Lapford, Crediton, Devon EX17 6QE.

Professional PBM Soccer League. Fully computer-moderated features include League and Cup games, transfers and Internationals. Start up pack £4, subsequent turns £1.30 per fortnight. Write to Grimsdale Games, 12 Aspen Way, Cringleford, Norwich NR4 6UA.

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READERPAGE

"Like last year there will be the usual selection of flashy stands with video screens to replace the products that weren't quite finished in time . . . "

So suggests NIGEL PALMER of Eaton in his slightly cynical view of the 1988 PC Show. His letter earns £40 of software from READERPAGE

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS

THE PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW

Dear Games Machine
As no one in the computer industry can have failed to notice, we are coming up to this year's exhibition of hype and publicity at Earls Court.

Like last year there will be the usual selection of flashy stands with video screens to replace the products that weren't quite finished in time. Plus the usual innocent visitors who waste two quid on the most useless thing at the show – the show guide. A cynical view perhaps but possibly justified.

Let me give you an example of why I hold this view.

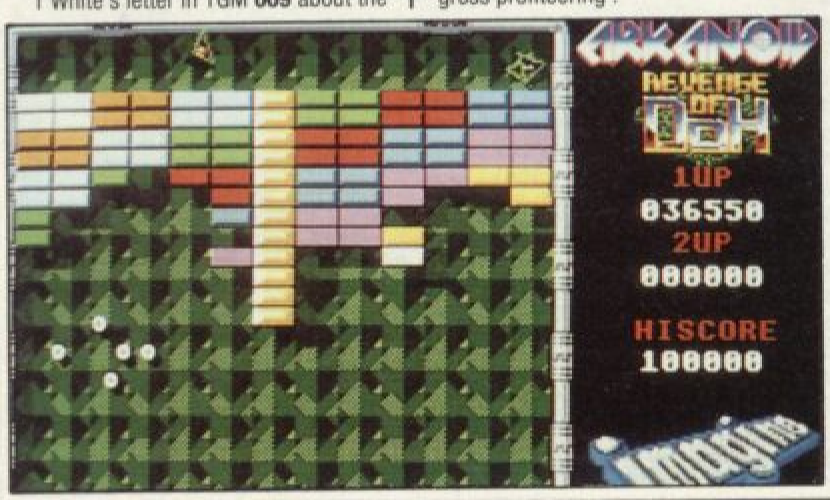


This year's business area is restricted. So I, along with anyone else under 18, can only visit the leisure part of the show. Fine, obviously IBM and their clan do not want hordes of excited kids getting in the way of important business deals. Yet, the admission price is the same for everyone – no concessions for under 18s who will see much less.

OK, so no one's going to worry about a pound one way or the other, but isn't it typical of the way the industry is cheating the people who make it such a success?

T White's letter in TGM **009** about the price of 16-bit software is another example. Are Ocean seriously going to tell me that they couldn't make a reasonable profit on the 16-bit versions of *Arkanoid 2*, if they sold it at £14.95 instead of £19.95?

After all, the licence cost has already been paid in some part by the success of the 8-bit version, and *Breakout* is hardly the toughest type of game to program. They managed to sell the original *Arkanoid* on the ST for £14.95 last year when the number of ST owners was much smaller. Surely a clear case of 'gross profiteering'.



Mail Order firms are still as risky as ever. After Cut Price Software failed to send me my software, no amount of phone calls or letters could get either my game, or my money back, indeed all of my letters were ignored. What do I do now? Cut Price Software have my money, but won't even talk to me. Is there anything I can do?

After using many firms successfully, this incident shattered my faith in buying through the post. But there *are* reputable firms. If you don't want to pay full price in the shops, I can recommend Holmesoft for speed, and Newsfield for reliability and a willingness to help.

TGM is generally very good but be careful not to get taken over by the 16-bits, I hope that Newsfield Publications continue to keep such a high standard, particularly at a time when the standards of the industry as a whole seem to be dropping.
Nigel Palmer, Eaton

Dear me Nige, we do seemed to be a little racked off don't we? It may not alter the force of your point, but in fact the PC Show (or the PCW Show previously) has always restricted the Business Section to over-18s.

Licences can be paid for, generally, in two ways: a once-off lumpsum, or – more commonly – on a per-game-sold basis. If Arkanoid is on the latter basis, it means Ocean pays over a slab each time one if us buys one. Ocean and the others will continue to make as much as they can as long as as we keep buying them. TGM agrees that the majority of 16-bit games are presently not worth the money – but they are getting better all the time.

On the mail order question: you could try your local Officer of Fair Trading, but that can be tedious. Probably the best thing to do is what you have done – write to TGM so others will be warned, and give your custom to those companies you know to be reliable.

FROM ONE WHO KNOWS

Dear Games Machine
I have just had the misfortune to come cross the two articles on video written by Mel Croucher and published in your March and July issues.

Mr Croucher's predilection for the Video-8 format was initially puzzling but, let's face it, everybody should be allowed their prejudices. All was explained, finally, almost at the end of the last article when he pointed out 'Okay, I admit, I use Sony's Pro Video 8 range for my A/V productions'.

Having spent all that money its only natural he would need to justify it somehow.

If we ignore the ill-judged opinions however, and just look at the facts as stated, there are some very serious factual errors which should be corrected.

1. VHS uses a helical scanning system identical in principle to that used in Betamax, V2000 and Video 8. It does not use 'crummy vertical scanning'.
2. VHS-C camcorders are described as 'hernia-inducing plastic boxes'. If Mr Croucher is liable to hernias from lifting units weighing between 760 grams and 2.1Kg, how can he possible manage his favourite camcorder weighing 3Kg?
3. 'VHS-HQ machines have a tuner for eliminating those irritating electronic ski tracks that infest standard VHS.' What on earth does this mean?
4. The reason Mr Croucher couldn't find anybody prepared to hire Super-VHS in March was because the system was only announced in May and is not due for release until the end of the year.
5. One of the reasons Betamax has always run a sluggish second to VHS is because it was developed from the – by domestic standards – sluggish, cumbersome and complex loading system of the U-Matic professional system.
6. Five types of video player are listed, one of which is VCR which always represents Video Cassette Recorder.
7. Legally, copyright problems will always rear their ugly little heads if you 'rip off other people's images and adapt them for your own use and abuse'. Showing them to your friends or family constitutes a public showing and is therefore, a copyright infringement.
8. It is impossible to superimpose two sets of computer-generated images without expensive genlocking equipment.
9. The Image Sensor updates its information 50 times a second in European cameras, 60 times a second only applies to the American/Japanese system. Video 8 cameras only update 25 times a second giving some very nasty movement effects at times.
10. Why on earth would a viewfinder need a television tuner. Obviously Mr Croucher prefers to watch *Neighbours* on a 1/2 inch 'mono TV receiver!'
11. The capstan moves the tape at the correct speed – not the Head Drum.
12. The Ferguson FC06, JVC GR-C9 and Nordmende CV-1100 have identical electronics to the JVC GR-C11, Telefunken VM-2895 and Philips VKR-6836 although the latter group have a different optical system. If the picture quality was so different I am surprised he didn't contact at least one of the manufacturers to discuss how this could be. The weight of this latter group is also incorrectly stated as 1.2Kg where it should be 960 grams.
13. Video 8's PCM audio system can hardly be described as state-of-the-art. After all it is only an 8-bit system. All other PCM systems are at least 14-bit, most are 16-bit. In fact audio seems to be quite an obsession, but I very much doubt if any difference can be heard between Standard VHS and the so-called high quality Video 8 systems when reproduced on the 2 inch x 3½ inch eliptical speakers fitted to most TV sets. In terms of bandwidth VHS Hi-Fi is in fact better than the restricted Video 8 systems. Video-8, of course, carries the buzzword digital.

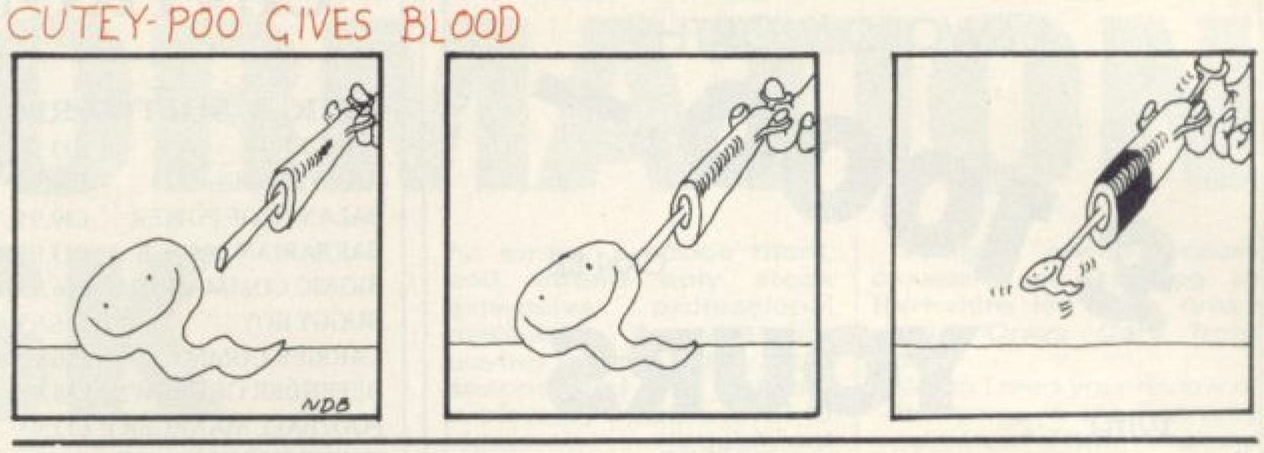
After all the doubtful facts we reach a conclusion with which it is difficult to disagree but difficult to justify by the preceding article. Viz ' . . . most camcorders give very similar results . . .

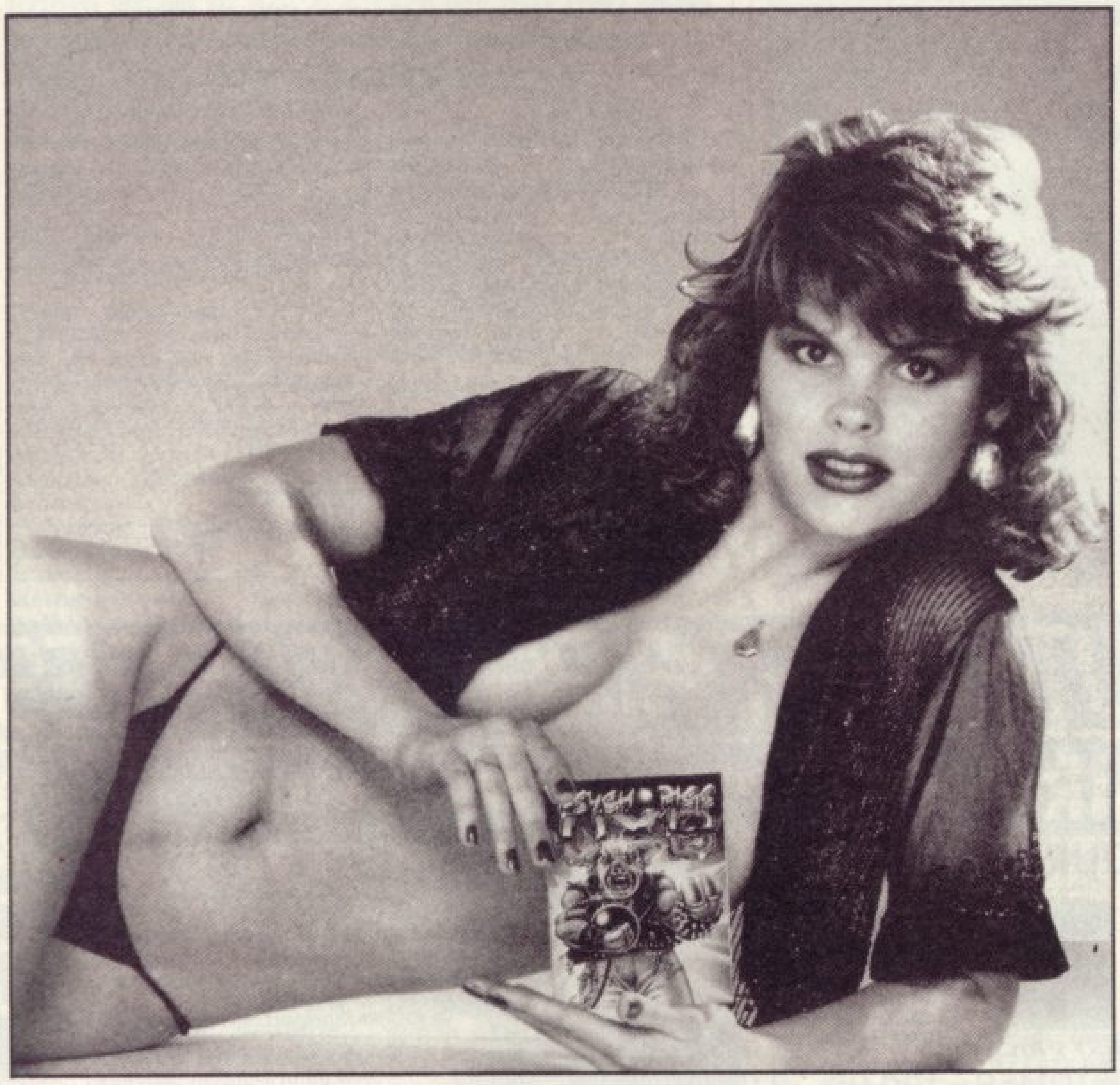
comfort and ease of use become a major factor'.

I can only add one further word of advice. Ignore everything else you have read in these two articles, visit your local video dealer, try the cameras for yourself, include in your tests cameras pictured in the article but studiously ignored in the words – like the Panasonic NV-MC10 and the JVC GR-45 – and make up your own mind.

MJ Whyman, Product Manager – Portable Video, JVC (UK) Limited

Thanks for putting us straight Mr Whyman . . . over to you, Mel . . . er next month maybe?





PSYCHO PIGS AD: A BOAR?

Dear Games Machine

I've had enough! The letters page has become dull and boring! It's full of intelligent and moral comment on the state of computing today and boring drivel about how TGM should be improved (IMPOSSIBLE!).

Where has all the controversy gone? Where are all the letters about pictures of naked women degrading humanity? Where are all the 'my computer is better than yours' letters? (Some great ones: Amstrad v Nintendo, Cray II v Archimedes, Spectrum v paperweight!). Where's all the 'satirical comment on the materialist extravagance of modern British teenagers? (Thank you Mr Tapper (TGM **009**)

Are TGM the culprits by giving forty quid to the writer of the most intelligent and well thought out letter? The buck stops here! This one's more controversial than Colonel Gadaffi.

The Amiga is better than anything since the Abacus, all Nintendo and MSX owners should be deported to Japan where they can have all the software they could possible want.

Stop complaining about TGM, if you don't like it – DON'T BUY IT!

Why shouldn't pictures of naked women be printed in computer magazines? (As for page 2-3 of TGM **009**, I know which one I'd rather play with).

Who cares if new film ideas were 'stolen' from old film ideas? (Only Mel would remember anyway!) Let's have some decent support for the Dragon, Enterprise and C16!

If that little lot doesn't get 'em writing, nothing will.

Disclaimer: The above was written under the influence of an obscure hallucinatory drug. Hardly any of the views expressed are those of the writer, and the idea of playing with a woman as if she were a game is low and degrading – the executive who thought it up should be humanely put down for the good of society.

Robert Crowther, Kibworth, Leics

A brilliant idea Robert. If all the MSX and Nintendo owners in the UK went to Japan to play with women, there would be more left for us!

A MEAGRE CONVERSION

Dear Games Machine

Every Amiga owner in the UK must be fed up with software companies such as US Gold, Ocean etc as they make no attempt to improve the Amiga version of a game. If someone bought an Amiga rather than an ST because of its superior capabilities, they should at last be able to play a game knowing that they have the best version available.

These companies write the ST version and then transfer it straight onto the Amiga. They then have the cheek to charge us Amiga owners an extra five pounds! Electronic Arts, on the other hand, are doing things right with games like *Ferrari Formula One* and *Interceptor*.

K Mundell, Larne

'Capability', 'full potential' etc, are all buzzwords – and like all buzzwords, sometimes relevant, sometimes not. Whether software houses realise the 'full potential' of a machine is surely secondary to the quality of play.* Atron 5000*, reviewed in this issue, barely uses the Amiga's power at all, yet our reviewers, the tea lady, window cleaner and postman have all been light-cycling around the screen for weeks. Perhaps we're all becoming too finicky. If you enjoy a game then that's all there should be to it. Dream on . . .

HAVE NO FEAR

Dear Games Machine

Is Mercy Dash drawn by the same artist who used to draw Felicity Freebody? It's just that the artwork (especially the stockings and suspenders issue) is very similar.

Secondly, why don't you do a readers' art page like you do in CRASH and ZZAP! 64? I've enclosed a disk of my doodles in case you're thinking of the idea already. They're compacted.

Lastly, I haven't seen FEAR anywhere near me. Are you sure you can actually buy it from the newsagents?

Noel Wallace, Wandsworth.

No! Robin Evans has never drawn anything before in his life – and that's straight from the horse's mouth!

ZZAP usually took its art from Compunet, and doesn't regularly feature art anymore. TGM will be publishing the best of the Computer Art Exhibition after the PC Show, and encouraging more original material thereafter.

Yes,* FEAR *is available throughout the country, but we're advised to tell you to ask your newsagent to order your copy. Issue 2 is out now.

Thanks for the piccies, we especially like Savik.

So what's going down, or up or anywhere? Got anything to say? Anything to complain about (or praise, let's not be negative)? Write to READERPAGE, TGM, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB* – we're here to listen.

INFORMATION DESK

Robin Hogg is once again let out just long enough to peruse through your letters posted to TGM's Information Desk.

We kick off with JC MALINS from Hampton in Middlesex who asks . . .

■ Is *Flight Simulator II* available for the Commodore 64?

Flight Simulator II* from subLOGIC *is* available in the UK through your local dealer at £27.95. If they can't help then try Microdealer International, *Monarch House, 16 Third Avenue, Denbigh West Industrial Estate, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK1 1TH.

MISS A HEATH of Hammersmith, London writes:

■ I recently purchased an Atari Video Games console which is compatible with all existing 2600 game cartridges. Unfortunately, I'm having difficulty obtaining the cartridges. Could you please give me a list of suppliers.

Anything to help a lady in distress. The Silica Shop has extensive stocks of Atari products, including VCS cartridges, and their mail order department is at *1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup Kent DA14 4DX* ☎ (01) 309 1111. Alternatively, phone the Atari Helpline on (01) 309 7770 for details of your nearest dealer.

Closer to home (my home anyway), ANDREW WILLIAMS of Neath, West Glamorgan wants to know . . .

■ What books do I need to learn to write assembly language games for the Archimedes?

The *Archimedes Assembly Language Programming* book covers all aspects of coding and could be used for any application desired – games in your case – though it is not specialised. The book is no longer being printed, but a copy may be obtained from Compubooks, *2 The Willows, Hollywood, Birmingham B47 5EE.*

Speaking of funny languages, IGNACIO ALDAZABAL of Bilbao in sunny Spain is a beginner to adventure games and enjoys them a lot. But wants to know . . .

■ Which of the following is best suited for a novice like me? *The Pawn*, *Jinxter*, *Knight Orc*, *Gnome Ranger* or *Guild Of Thieves*?

Resident adventure wizard Rob Steel put down his bottle long enough to recommend *The Pawn* as being relatively easy to begin with. Even better for the novice adventurer is *Moonmist* or *Wishbringer* by Infocom. These are available on disk-only for practically every machine except the Spectrum and BBC. Ignacio also asked a question regarding the



***Dragon's Lair* laser disc system. MARTIN SALVONA of Brockworth, Gloucester effectively asked the same question:**

■ From where may I obtain a cheap laser disc player for use with the game, and where can I get the interface cable?

Laser disc players are very hard to get hold of in the UK. Many manufacturers no longer produce them, and others only stock expensive professional machines. As you are buying on a budget, local secondhand dealers, preferably those with hi-fi/video equipment specialisation, would be the best source. The interface, on the other hand, can be easily obtained from Microdeal, priced £19.95. Martin continues his letter by asking . . .

■ To whom do I send off for the actual laser disc and can the ordinary 520ST be used for the game?

As with the connector cable, Microdeal can supply the laser disc, costing £99.95 including ST software, at *PO Box 68, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 4YB* ☎ (0726) 68020. With the relevant software and laser disc hardware, a standard ST can be used. Changing the subject slightly (but definitely getting his money's worth), Martin continues . . .

■ Is the Epson LQ-500 printer compatible with the Amiga 500 and how much does it cost?

The LQ-500 *is* compatible. Plug it into the parallel port using a standard interface. But it needs a printer driver to run it (available from Amiga User Group, ☎ (0533) 5500993). Priced at £430, Ladbroke Computing (☎ (0772) 21474) offer free delivery.



The Pawn*: not so easy to complete but simple enough to get into*

Amiga owner GEOFF CHAMBERS of Reading in Berkshire isn't too crazy about *Crazy Cars* from Titus.

■ When I read your review of the game in the February edition of TGM, I realised my copy is different. It doesn't give as much extra time when passing through each stage, and, among other differences, there are no sound effects on the game-over screen. Is my copy faulty?

Our copy of *Crazy Cars* has disappeared, so I couldn't personally compare it against any differences yours may have. Titus software have only produced one version for the Amiga, so there shouldn't be anything wrong with the one you have – the differences you mentioned are part of any other copy of *Crazy Cars*.

A previous inquirer to Information Desk, GARY SHAW of Cleethorpes, writes again to ask . . .

■ Does anybody make reset switches for the Amiga?

Since pressing the two Amiga keys together with Control key resets the machine it seems unlikely. He goes on . . .

■ Are *California Games*, *The Last Ninja*, *Super Hang-On* and *Double Dragon* coming out on the Amiga?

***California Games* has been delayed but it's planned to come out in the second week c⁴ September. *Super Hang On* has no release**

PRESS ANY KEY

date yet, but the ST programmer of the game hopes to rewrite it for the Amiga. As for *The Last Ninja*, there are no plans to convert it just yet, but who knows? *Double Dragon* was covered in TGM 010 preview section with an Amiga screenshot. On the subject of Amigas, DC WILLIAMS of Bangor in Gwynedd has problems with his . . .

■ I want to add a RAM expansion in the near future. I'm considering Commodore's own A512 RAM/Clock expansion, but remain concerned about what might happen if my machine was infected with the virus. As the clock in the expanded memory is battery-powered, would the Amiga retain the virus even after the computer was switched off? Would removing the RAM cartridge and then putting it back get rid of the virus, and would that damage the Amiga itself? How long does the battery last and can it be removed?

Phew! Fortunately the virus is not held within RAM occupied by the battery-powered clock – while removing the RAM pack every time would wear the connections away and eventually damage the machine.

To take a break from the more serious side of computers, here's a quick tip for the Sega game *Alex Kidd In Miracle World* from of MATTHEW PRICE of Hexham in Northumberland.

On the second water level use the teleport powder and punch the octopus that appears in the head till it dies. Then push Alex, downward onto the Octopus's seat and you should find a secret level. Swim past two large fish and you'll reach land with oodles of money to collect and an extra life.

And talking of machines foreign, the PC Engine letters never end. Among them is one from A ATTWOOD of Stourbridge, West Midlands with the million dollar question:

■ When could I (and probably thousands of other people) get their hands on this awesome machine and how much will it cost?

Unfortunately NEC have yet to decide whether the PC Engine should ever be released outside the Japanese market. Certainly there is no possibility whatsoever of the PC Engine being available on the British high street this year. As for next year, maybe, but NEC are still considering whether the machine would be a success. To pour salt on your wounds, NEC have sold 700,000 PC Engines in Japan priced between £100, and £120. Games cost approximately £20. Moreover NEC plan to release a PC Engine CD-ROM this autumn – in Japan only – which has 500 Mbytes of memory. It is said, laconically, 'to produce some rather amazing games'. NEC intend the PC Engine to be the core of an entire home leisure system with serious applications as well.

Next we have JC ELLIS of York, who is a lounge lizard – but only when he's playing Sierra's adventure game *Leisure Suit Larry* in which he has now come up against a problem.



PC Engine: storming Japan, damned elusive here

■ I'm stuck. Among other things I can't seem to get the pills off the window sill from the fire escape. How may I obtain the solution to this and other problems without having to write to Sierra in America?

Try writing to Electric Dreams, *Terminus House, Terminus Terrace, Southampton SO1 1FE* – they should help. Another adventurer, S ARDEN of Altrincham, Cheshire seeks guidance concerning the Infocom adventure wrapped up in red-tape, *Bureaucracy*.

■ Are there any hint books available for this adventure? If so could you give me more details.

***Invisi-clue* books are available at £6.99 from Activision/Mediagenic, *23 Pond Street, Hampstead, London*. Another resident of Cheshire, JUSTIN WEBB from Warrington asks about life, the universe and ST software.**

■ I'm looking for software to transfer ST BASIC programs into a faster language such as machine code. What do you recommend?

LDW-Basic Compiler will work with old versions of ST BASIC priced $59.95 (American product you see) and is available from Silica Shop (see above for address).

MSX owner M SIMPSON of Thornton Heath in Surrey asks for help with not only his Toshiba HX-10 but his Philips VG 8230 media system, both of which have developed problems.

■ My HX-10 could be faulty internally because commands such as RUN fail to execute. What can I do about it?

The fault does indeed sound internal and your best bet is to take it back to the retailer who sold it to you. If that's not possible, you could send it back to Toshiba but that's likely to take a long time. Alternatively you might contact Anglosoft (see below). Mr Simpson continues:

■ Also my MSX II is possibly faulty in that there is no picture without sound and vice versa. Do I need a modulator or special lead, or is it an internal fault?

In all likelihood you've got a European model MSX II which hasn't been converted for the different television standard we have here. One solution would be to buy a monitor, another would be to contact Anglosoft. They might be able to sell you a modulator, but it's more likely that you'll actually have to send your machine to them for modification. Their address is Anglosoft, *142 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2EJ* ☎ (0203) 615959. He concludes:

■ I have no user and reference manual for my MSX II. Would Philips or Sony be able to help me? If so could you give me their addresses?

Sorry, unless you speak Japanese or German you're stuck. Since the machine has yet to released in the UK, English manuals are unavailable.

Well, that's it for this month, tune in next month for the definitive *Starglider II* tips and yet more problem solving. If you've any tips, maps, computer or electronic entertainment crises yourself, transform them into a full-blown, technicolor TGM production by writing to INFORMATION DESK, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*. You can also MBX us with I-D TGM.

UNCLE MEL'S TRIVIA QUIZ

Test your computer and general knowledge with Mel Croucher's daft questions.

1) A silver-plated device for protecting pregnant women against VDU radiation has been launched. What is it?
2) Name Fergie McNeill's new label
3) In which adventure is the 'ferg' the unit of currency?
4) Why have Domark's bosses recently been cuddling an inflatable rubber Fergie? *(That's enough Fergie questions –Ed).*
5) Who is handling Microsoft's advertising? **a)** Liez, Beauls & Konne; **b)** Barrington Barmy; **c)** Saatchi & Saatchi
6) A Russian spy was responsible for setting up the first British computing establishment after World War II. Name the man and the year.
7) What's the difference between Stuart Wynne and a rectangular Crawford's biscuit?
8) How many Trades Unionists does it take to program a computer?
9) Name one of Stephen Hall of GrandSlam's greatest assets.
10) Who is responsible for *Hawkeye*? **a)** Games Without Frontiers; **b)** Boys Without Brains; **c)** The Royal Society For Fried Eggs Instead Of Eyeballs In Artwork.
11) Spot the odd one out: Sanserif Normal, Westend Bold, Rod Stewart.
12) Who provided the original voice of Mickey Mouse?
13) True or false, the term 'Quark' was invented by James Joyce.
14) How big was US Gold's turnover last year, give or take a half million?
15) What is the title of Jeff Minter's latest product? **a)** Dippy Hippy; **b)** Hari Llama; **c)** Trip-a-tron.
16) Which software houses are scrambled in these insults? 'HA! LA SMUT', 'MAE SIN FROG', 'EAT V. LATRINE'.
17) Who are Jimmy Doohan, George Takei, Nichelle Nichols and Walter Koeing better known as?
18) Fill in the missing words: . . . . MISSING, ...'S MINE, HOPPING . . . , BAN . . . KNIGHTS, TIME . . . MAGIK, SLAM. . . .
19) Why was *Vixen* changed to *She Fox* for the German market?
20) What number is the NEWSFIELD stand at the PC Show, what's next to it and who are those loonies in the corner?

ANSWERS

1) A Petticoat, the 'Silver Lining', price £15
2) Abstract Concepts
3) *The Guild Of Thieves*
4) To promote their *Spitting Image* game.
5) Saatchi and Saatchi
6) Klaus Fuchs, 1948
7) None (they're both crackers)
8) 20 (one to program, the other 19 to deny accusations of overmanning)
9) *Chubby Gristle*
10) Boys Without Brains
11) None (they're all clapped out dot matrix type faces)
12) Walt Disney himself
13) True, although yuppie ducks dispute this
14) £7,367,000
15) *Trip-a-tron* (Jeff Bridges watch your step!)
16) Thalamus, Infogrames, Alternative
17) Scotty, Lt Sulu, Uhura, Ensign Chekov
18) THE PRESIDENT IS SLIMEY MAD KOK AND BALL
19) *Vixen* sounds very like the German word for sexual intercourse. (Mind you, *She Fox* sounds like the English for the same thing)
20) Stand 3434, next to the Oasis bar (surprise!), the loonies are Mr M Croucher, Robin Beanpole Evans and Mercy Dash. See ya there!

ENDPIECE

Gimmicks That Misfired (Part 1): You may have observed other organs falling for Mastertronic's cheap marketing trick shown here. But not TGM, no sir; we put our Inside Story team onto the case and actually rang the numbers.

Buckingham Palace answered politely, the White House a little less so. Mikhail Gorbachev was unavailable (we hear he's working for Amstrad now), the Vatican switchboard answered but was apparently manned by Trappists.

Margaret Thatcher was not in service, which we knew already; and when we dialled the number of West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, all we heard was a lot of clicking.

Mastertronic? Who they?

Gimmicks That Misfired (Part 2): You may have observed other organs (look – observing organs is a clean, joyful and natural thing to do) wittering on about Mickey Mouse's 50th birthday when Gremlin Graphics released the licence.

Talk about living in the past! Mickey's actually *60* this year. Gremlin's Richard Barclay maintains they knew that all along, though we *swear* they mentioned 50 when the game came out.

Richard Barclay looks 11, but is actually 21.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II -	01 930 4832
MARGARET THATCHER -	01 233 3000
MIKHAIL GORBACHEV	010 7095 295 9061
RONALD REAGAN	0101 202 456 1414
HELMUT KOHL	010 49 228 561
POPE JOHN PAUL II	010 39 66982
MASTERTRONIC	01 727 8070
MELBOURNE HOUSE	01 727 8070



Gimmicks That Can Only Misfire (one is enough): This happy fella called Max Michaels has drawn a $1m^2$ picture containing one million squares, each $1mm^2$ (you follow?). He's selling each for £1.07½ – you don't get to actually take the squares away, but you can visit them at his Brighton showroom.

The good side is that 50p of your £1.07½ goes to the Save The Children Fund. Cheques or details from One Million Squares, *92 Milner Road, Brighton BN2 4BQ.*

We met one million squares once. It was at the *PC User* show.

STOP PRESS Budget company **The Power House has gone under** with apparently 'substantial' debts, despite its claim to have sold 250,000 games since splitting from CRL in February . . .

STOP PRESS The worldwide **crackdown on piracy continues**. Glasgow police, assisted by Electronic Arts and the Federation Against Software Theft, seized £100,000 worth of pirated games and business packages in Glasgow . . . while in Hong Kong, reputedly the worst place of all for the piracy problem, the colony's government recovered pirated software worth over £600,000 in a series of raids. *(Nah, Bangkok's worse –Ed.)*

STOP PRESS Mediagenic have grabbed five **Sega coin-op licences**: *Galaxy Force, Altered Beast, Hot Rod, Sonic Boom* and *Ace Attacker* . . .

STOP PRESS Games Workshop recently held their **Golden Demon Awards** in Nottingham, featuring games and miniatures . . . Matsushita have developed a **new compact disc** which can store twice as much information as today's discs, using lasers with a shorter wavelength . . . the September issue of *Everyday Electronics* magazine reveals a super soaraway way to build an **interface for the Amstrad Joyces** . . . Japanese owners of **Video Walkmen** can now buy a regular magazine to watch on their pocket sets . . . Acorn will have a **new Archimedes operating system** at the PC Show, allowing multitasking . . . Adventure programmers **Level 9** (*Gnome Ranger* et al) have left Mandarin Software just months after joining them from Rainbird . . .

NEXT MONTH!

MICROPROSE WITH ROSE and bring a sick bag and spare pair of trousers as we go flying in the 'Miss MicroProse' with Major Bill himself. Gape at what made John Minson ask if he had life insurance, shock at why Anthony Jacobson demanded to know where the ejector seat was, cower at the awesome power of the T-28 in mid power-dive. You won't believe it. Do a victory roll with TGM **012**.

SONY ROCK'N'ROLL BUT I LIKE IT And so you should! You could win a Sony Sound Bag, Colour TV or Stereo Cassette Radio simply by entering Power Play's mega competition. PLUS Cruiser joysticks galore for runners up.

ST-ELITE arrives! The all-time classic of space pirates, interplanetary trading and Thargoids hyperspaces STwards. TGM, as always, will provide you with the most in-depth, unbiased review you could hope to read.

COMIC CUTS Stuart 'Crackers' Wynne goes transatlantic again to get THE interview with comic book king, William Gibson. And he takes a look at that famous Irish policeman, Rob o' Cop (we think that's what he said).

YES WE HAVE NOTATORS because Jon 'Man of Harlech' Bates finds a nifty (and pricey) notator sequence and scoring utility for the Atari ST 1040. And he does more (see below).

MEET YOUR CREATOR and unleash your imagination . . . and design the game of your dreams – (its says here!). TGM gets to grips with *STOS*, the ST game creator from Mandarin.

PLUS more reviews than you can wave a joystick at, previews moist with anticipation, coinplay for the incurably penniless, boardplay for those who prefer manual control, roleplay for your fantasies, foreplay for *(CUT! –Ed), adventures to blow your mind, AND* . . .

THE KEYBOARD SUPPLEMENT Yes, entirely free inside next month's TGM, a crampacked musical special on musical hardware for your computers. The Compleat Keyboardist from the complete. Bates.

TGM 012 enhances your newsagent's shelves on October 20

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

HEROES OF THE LANCE

ARCADE ACTION

HEROES OF THE LANCE marks the first computer action game that re-creates the epic battle between good and evil on the world of Krynn.
Controlling eight Companions, each with different specialised attributes and skills, guide these brave adventurers deep into the treacherous ruins of the temple XaK Tsaroth to retrieve the precious Disks of Mishakal.
As you descend into the Abyss, the Companions must defeat the hordes of monstrous Draconians in hand-to-hand combat, deal with powerful magic and survive the onslaught of attacks from giant spiders, skeletal undead and countless other terrors.
But your final obstacle makes these monstrosities innocuous by comparison. The platinum disks you seek are guarded by Khisanth, an ancient black dragon. And there is but one way to vanquish this mighty beast…
…find the key to destroy Khisanth or you are doomed to failure.

CBM 64/128
£9.99 tape
£14.99 disk
SPECTRUM
48/128K
£9.99 tape
£14.99 +3 disk
AMSTRAD
£9.99 tape
£14.99 disk
IBM PC
& COMPATIBLES
£24.99
AMIGA
£24.99
ATARI ST
£24.99











POOL OF RADIANCE

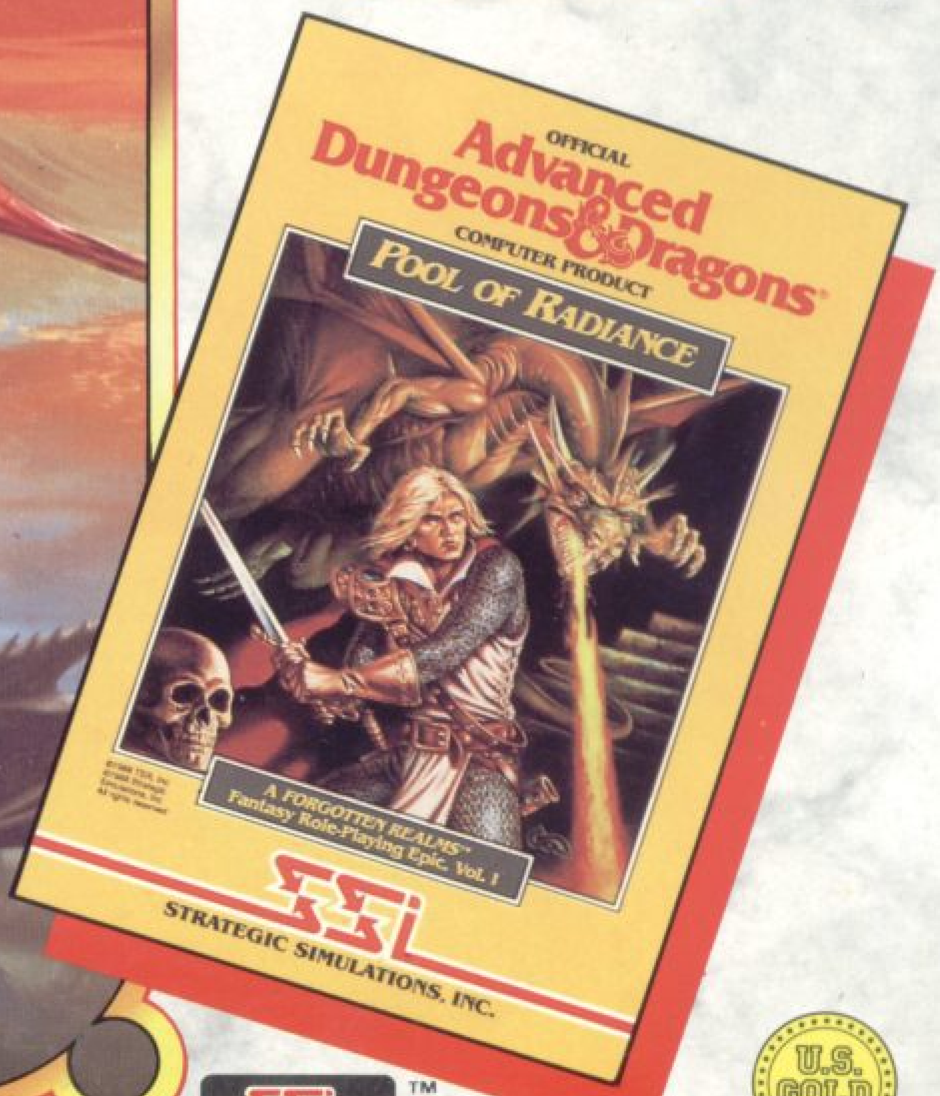
FANTASY ROLE PLAYING

Located on the northern shore of the Moonsea in the Forgotten Realms, the fabled city of Phlan had been overrun by monsters led by a mysterious leader. Your quest: discover the identity of this evil force.

Pool of Radiance adheres faithfully to the legendary Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ fantasy role playing systems. No detail is missed including 6 player characters; computer controlled non-player characters; the Adventurers' Journal packed with history, maps and clues and the Translation Wheel that converts Elvish and Dwarvish writing to English. The gameplay is exhilarating and the graphics state of the art – portrait displays, 3D perspective, tactical combat display and personalised weapons selections compile to form the ultimate breakthrough in fantasy role-playing computer games.



CBM 64/128
£9.99 tape
£14.99 disk
AMIGA
£24.99
IBM PC
& COMPATIBLES
£24.99
ATARI ST
£24.99



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TYPHOON
Soar through wave after wave of flying death in your armour-laden helicopter, scream through the skies in your F-14 as you take on the seemingly limitless hordes of mechanoid invaders, whose sole intent is total domination of the Earth. The storm is raging as the war is fought in the skies. TYPHOON – the Konami coin-op now for your home micro featuring fast scrolling and 3-D, frenzied dog-fighting, accumulate a vast array of deadly weapons. Six levels of pulse pounding excitememt. Each culminating in a devastating adversary.
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